



FUGITIVES

FROM THE ESCRITOIRE

OF

A RETIRED EDITOR. [Charles Davis]

1792-1884



BOSTON:

CROCKER AND BREWSTER.

1864.

3.21

OBERLIN
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

1. Religion - Addresses every lecture.



McCulloch Lith

D. Clarke.

Gift of
The Misses Quife

RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:

PRINTED BY H. O. HOUGHTON AND COMPANY.

000000

000000

248538

000000

TO MY BELOVED WIFE,
MRS. HANNAH ALVARD BLISS CLARKE,

This Volume,

COMPILED FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT AND BENEFIT OF OUR
FAMILY CIRCLE AND PERSONAL FRIENDS, AND
COMPLETED ON THIS

FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR MARRIAGE.

IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY

Dedicated.

DORUS CLARKE.

WALTHAM, *May 20, 1864.*



INTRODUCTORY NOTE.



THE history of these "Fugitives" may be quickly told. Some of them have appeared and reappeared, in various public journals, at frequent intervals for fifteen years past, till, it would seem, their periodicity might be calculated almost with the accuracy of that of the comets; others announced themselves in the stately reviews, and, protected by copyright or their own insignificance, they have figured no farther on the stage of affairs; some went before the public in the pamphlet form, and are still performing their mission in the world; and two or three more have now for the first time "made their escape," to give variety to the collection. In the more elaborated articles, will be found the Author's most matured views upon some of the profoundest problems in the whole circle of ethical and theological science. It is

to him a matter of grateful satisfaction to know, that these views have been substantially held by a long line of his intelligent and pious ancestors, extending back into the earliest times of New England and over the sea; and it is his earnest prayer that they may be embraced with the same sublime faith, and maintained with the same unswerving fidelity by all his descendants.



CONTENTS.

	Page
"SAYING THE CATECHISM".....	1
PECCADILLOES OF THE PULPIT.....	11
THE MERITS OF THE SABBATH HYMN-BOOK.....	29
RETURN TO THE SANCTUARY.....	59
THE ALLEGED PROGRESS IN THEOLOGY.....	60
COMMUNION WITH GOD.....	90
THE TESTS OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.....	91
THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY AND SLAVERY.....	118
ORIGINAL SIN.....	138
EVANGELISTS.....	162
THE HOLY TRINITY.....	190
LUX IN TENEBRIS.....	234



FUGITIVES.



“SAYING THE CATECHISM.”

THE town of Westhampton, in the County of Hampshire, and good Commonwealth of Massachusetts, exhibited some sixty years ago several traits of the Puritanical character, one of which, more particularly, we would fain by this article fix and stereotype upon the memory of the present generation. The scene of our story lies partly upon the beautiful Valley of the Connecticut, and partly upon the hills which form the eastern slope of the Green Mountain range, which extends from Canada to Long Island Sound. Few towns in the Bay State are equal to it for the quiet and the picturesque. The calm, serpentine Connecticut, searching its way to the ocean; Mount Tom, Mount Holyoke, Amherst College, Williston Seminary, Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, and several churches and smiling villages are distinctly visible from

its loftier points of observation. It is far retired from all the cities of our country, and the simple, primitive manners of the people were equally removed from the artificial habits of what is termed polished life. The inhabitants were united, to a most unusual degree, both in politics and religion. At several gubernatorial elections, Caleb Strong had all the votes of the town with but two or three exceptions. In ecclesiastical polity the people were, almost to a man, Congregationalists; and in theology, they were as unitedly Calvinists. Excepting one family, all observed Saturday evening as a part of holy time, and with great conscientiousness and strictness. The pastor of the church, and the only man in town who claimed to exercise the functions of the clerical office, was the Rev. Enoch Hale. He was the first minister of the place. In his earlier days his orthodoxy was not regarded as of the highest tone, but repeated revivals of religion, and a deeper personal, experimental acquaintance with divine things, rendered his preaching, during the last half of his protracted ministry, more discriminating and evangelical. His habits were systematic and exact to a proverb. Every family in the neighborhood could regulate its long kitchen clock by the precise punctuality with which he would

arrive to preach an appointed lecture. On the Sabbath, every man who was earlier or later than he at public worship doubted the correctness of his own chronometer. It must be wrong, for Mr. Hale was in the pulpit sooner or later than they were in the pews. He was for many years the clerical officer of the General Association of Congregational Ministers in the State. On one occasion, the meeting of that body was held seventy-five miles distant from his place of residence. Five minutes only were to elapse before the hour for opening the meeting would come. Speculation was rife as to the probability of his being there in season to attend to the duties of his office. One clergyman, who knew him better than the rest, remarked, that either the town clock was wrong, or Mr. Hale would yet be there punctually at the appointed hour. Curiosity became intense — the interest was prodigious; but before the last minute expired, Father Hale drove up, and was in his place in the church.

Our readers have already been advertised of the great strictness with which his people observed the Sabbath. When Mr. Hale was settled among them he was ordained in a barn. The first meeting-house was built shortly after, and though it exhibited many symptoms of de-

cay, and though old Boreas often treated himself to the music of the clatter of its doors and windows and shingles, it was still standing within our own recollection. It was innocent of paint and bell and steeple, as well as of a sparse congregation on the Sabbath. Rain or shine, snow or hail, lightning or thunder, the people were all there. The exercises were conducted with the greatest order and decorum. Father Hale carried his habits of system so far that he used to read, and to request his clerical brethren who occasionally preached for him, to read Watts's *Psalms and Hymns right straight through in course*, whatever might be their relevancy to the subject of the sermon. He always preached with his accurate watch lying on the pulpit before him; and as he used to pray with his eyes wide open, he was careful to cut his sermons and prayers to the prescribed length, and if the moment for closing either arrived when he was in the middle of a sentence, the remaining part was sure to be dispatched in short metre..

Bass-viol, violin, clarionet, and bugle, those modern refinements in the music of some country congregations, had not yet found their way to Westhampton. The only instrumental accompaniment was the pitch-pipe, with which the leader gave the key-note of the tune, in a tone

not unlike the modern steam-whistle, and sufficiently loud to be audible over the whole house. Then the large choir, filling the front seats in the galleries on three sides of the house, rose and poured out their music to such fugue tunes as "Majesty," "Bridgewater," and "Coronation," and in "strains," too, which, if they were not quite so "sweet" as those which "angels use," were, we doubt not, oftentimes acceptable to Gabriel and to God.

The pews of the old church were those large, high, square pens, which, as the parents sat below and the children in the galleries, would seem to have been constructed for the especial convenience of the boys who might be disposed to play at meeting. A remedy for this evil, however, was at hand; for if any of the thoughtless urchins made too free an use of their hiding-places, the loud rap and the pointing finger of the stern tythingman instantly reduced them to order, and fixed upon them a mark of disgrace never to be forgotten.

But we have detained our readers too long from "SAYING THE CATECHISM." Not that we expect that *they* can "say" it as well, if at all, as the youth in Westhampton in those olden times; but we wish to inform them how the heroes of our narrative "said" it, as the phrase then was.

The Catechism was divided into three parts. The first part comprehended all between "What is the chief end of man?" and "the first commandment." The second embraced all "the commandments," together with "What is required" and "What is forbidden" in them all, and "The reasons annexed for observing them." The third included all from the question, "Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?" to the end. The Catechism was required, by the public sentiment of the town, to be perfectly committed to memory, and publicly recited in the meeting-house, by all the children and youth between the ages of eight and fifteen. These public recitations were held on three different Sabbaths in the summer of every year, with perhaps a fortnight intervening between each of them, to allow sufficient time for the children to commit to memory the division assigned.

When the time arrived for commencing the exercise, the excitement was tremendous. As the great battle of Trafalgar was about to commence between the immense fleets of England and France, Lord Nelson displayed at the mast-head of his flag-ship, the *Victory*, the exciting proclamation, streaming in the wind, "ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN TO DO HIS DUTY." That

proclamation awoke all the national enthusiasm of his officers and men, and strung every nerve for the awful conflict. Scarcely less imperative and exciting was the annual announcement from the pulpit, by Father Hale, "*Sabbath after next, the first division of the Catechism will be recited here.*"

There was "no discharge in that war." Public sentiment demanded the most implicit obedience by all concerned. The old Catechisms were looked up, new ones bought, and parents set their children to the work at once and in earnest. Every question and every answer must be most thoroughly committed to memory, *verbatim, et literatim, et punctuatim*. The time for recitation was at the close of the afternoon service. All the children in the town, dressed in their "Sabbath-day clothes," were arranged, shoulder to shoulder, the boys on the one side, and the girls on the other of the broad aisle, beginning at the "deacons' seat," and extending down that aisle and round through the side aisles, as far as was necessary. The parents—"children of a larger growth"—crowded the pews and galleries, tremblingly anxious that their little ones might acquit themselves well. Father Hale occupied the pulpit, and put out the questions to the children in order, and each

one, when the question came to him, was expected to wheel out of the line, *à la militaire*, into the broad aisle, and face the minister, and make his best obeisance, and answer the question put to him without the slightest mistake. To be *told*, that is, to be *corrected* by the minister, was not a thing to be permitted by any child who expected thereafter to have any reputation in that town for good scholarship. Many were the "knees" which "smote one against another" during that fearful process. In this manner, the three divisions of the Catechism were successively recited, and many are the persons who recollect, and will long recollect the palpitating heart, the tremulous voice, the quivering frame, with which for several years they went through that terrible ordeal.

But the *moral* influence of that exercise upon the youth of Westhampton, was as salutary as its nervous effects were appalling. It indoctrinated them into the great truths of Christianity. They did not, of course, descend into the profound depths of the metaphysics of theology, but they became possessed of the *system* which was embraced by their fathers. They were not, indeed, prepared to

"Reason high
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute ;"

but their minds were so filled with the outline of revealed truth; they so well understood the character and government of God, and the method of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, —

"That, to the height of this great argument,
They could assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

That practice of "saying the Catechism," originated in the high-toned evangelical influence of JONATHAN EDWARDS upon Northampton and the adjacent region, and it was at last superseded by the modern Sabbath School, — a substitute, indeed, but whether it is an *improvement* is very questionable. That thorough indoctrination of all the people of the town into the great system of evangelical truth, was continued through the lifetime of more than one generation, and therefore long enough to test its real effects upon human character and life. The result has been that sobriety, morality, and intelligence are all but universally prevalent. Revivals of religion have been of frequent occurrence, and more than *one third* of the population, all told, are now (in 1864), members of the Congregational Church. Nine tenths of the inhabitants are stated attendants on public worship. A larger percentage of the young men,

for the last fifty years, it is believed, have obtained a liberal education, have entered the learned professions, and have risen to higher positions of usefulness and of honor, than can be found in any other town in the Commonwealth. Property is very equally distributed. The prayer of Agur has been answered there. Paupers are unknown. As Defoe said of the Scotch, the inhabitants are

“ Rich compared to poor, and poor compared to rich.”

For all that renders this life enjoyable, and especially for that *immortal hope* which casts the brightest horoscope on the Eternal Future, we know of no community which can show a better record.

In closing this article, the writer cannot but acknowledge his deep obligations to his parents, who long since, as he trusts, “passed into the skies,” for their fidelity in requiring him, much against his will, to commit to memory the “Assembly’s Catechism,” and to “say” it publicly for six or seven years in succession, in the old meeting-house in Westhampton, amid tremblings and agitations which he can never cease to remember.





PECCADILLOES OF THE PULPIT.

MORE than half a century has passed away since John Foster wrote his celebrated Essay on the "Causes which render Evangelical Religion unacceptable to persons of Cultivated Taste." The influence of that Essay upon the pulpit, both in Great Britain and the United States, has been by no means inconsiderable. It has made the clergy more attentive to the manner in which their public functions should be discharged. It has promoted improvement in the style of delivery, and in the literary and rhetorical qualities of the matter pronounced. The æsthetics of the pulpit have undergone a most desirable change. Besides, within the period referred to, the intellectual culture of the people has made decided progress. Education has been widely disseminated. Matters of taste, in the style and manner of public speakers, now meet with very general attention. In most of the religious congregations of our country, even in its less cultivated districts, there are individuals

who are better acquainted with Blair and Campbell and Whately, than with Calvin and Edwards and Dwight. They are better critics of style than of theology. They will sooner detect a grammatical blunder, or a flaw in the argument, than an error in doctrine; and such rhetorical blemishes, such violations of correct literary taste, will oftentimes neutralize the influence of the most orthodox discourse. A preacher who is found tripping in these minor matters, will be likely to enjoy but little leniency in the judgment of those whose canons of criticism are often violated. "Talents, angel-bright," will make but a partial atonement, in their severe estimate, for those blemishes of style and manner which have excited their disgust. The melancholy consequences of such a state of mind, in such hearers of the Gospel, will be quite likely to reach immeasurably beyond the present life. The subject, then, is of the gravest character.

We would further remark, that we do not now intend to consider how seriously Evangelical Religion is affected by those errors which abound in some of the pulpits of Protestant Christendom. We assume, in this article, as a postulate, that the pure Gospel of Christ is preached; that those views of it which are commonly styled Evangelical are presented; and our object is to

point out some of the *Peccadilloes of the Pulpit* under such ministrations. Manners have been styled "the minor morals;" and in these, in relation to preaching, there are several classes of faults. Some relate to the *style of writing*, others to the *manner of delivery*;—some to the *selection of subjects*, and others to the *æsthetics* of the preacher.

With regard to *the style of composition*, there are certain cant, ungrammatical, and unrhetorical phrases, which have crept into current use, but which are decidedly objectionable on the score of good taste. Some of these phrases are the following:—"Being renewedly made sensible;" "having his mind drawn" to this or that thing; "feeling a sense of duty;" "seeing, or not seeing his way clear" into this or that matter; praying that "the Holy Spirit may rest *down* upon us;" that He "would solemnize our minds;" that He "would fit and prepare us for death;" that He "would appear in our midst;" that "we may be no longer cold and indifferent;" that we may "live more unreservedly to the glory of God;" that we may be "more perfectly devoted to His service;" that we may "live more entirely" to His praise; and that He would spread the Gospel over "the lengths and breadths" of the earth. An incorrect collocation of adjectives is of frequent occurrence:

such as "strong points of resemblance" for "points of strong resemblance," and a "brother's dying care" for "a dying brother's care." In these cases, it is not the "points" which are "strong," but the "resemblance;" not the "care" of the brother which is dying," but the "brother" himself. The phrases, "propitiate the divine favor" and "propitiate the divine wrath," are not unfrequently heard from the pulpit; but it is clear that, as "favor" and "wrath" are opposites, both of them cannot be propitiated.

These few examples of blemishes in style are specified to illustrate the position we have taken. This list might be extended indefinitely, but our object simply is to arrest attention to the subject, and a few cases of glaring impropriety will, perhaps, be as impressive as a longer inventory. And in addition to the frequent use of phrases which are violations of grammatical and rhetorical propriety, there are large classes of hackneyed and technical sentences, which are equally obnoxious to a pure literary taste. In many sermons, too, and especially in those of the younger clergy, there is sometimes such a superabundance of words that the sense is obscured. Baxter says, "It takes all our learning to make things plain." A person of cultivated intellectual powers, but of great devoutness of mind, and one,

too, who abjures the spirit of criticism in the house of God, will, nevertheless, in spite of himself, find his attention diverted to the style and manner of the speaker, by these repeated violations of literary propriety. His taste will get the better of his devotion, and he soon becomes so much disgusted as to seek another church or another pastor. This slovenly style of writing we regard as the more inexcusable, on account of the superior literary advantages which are within the reach of the clergy of the present day. Most of them have enjoyed the very best instruction in their preparatory, collegiate, and professional courses of study; and they have entered the pulpit awake to the fact that the standard of popular education is already high, and that it is constantly rising. They must, therefore, be aware, that to meet the high, but reasonable expectations of enlightened congregations, no small draft will be made upon the literary treasures they have so long been accumulating, and which are supposed to be still augmenting. Those drafts they must be prepared, in commercial phrase, to *meet at sight*; and if they are (to continue the figure) allowed to be *dishonored*, and especially if such failures to meet accepted obligations are of frequent occurrence, the delinquent must fall into profes-

sional bankruptcy. There are no underwriters who can prevent the melancholy result. It is to this source that we trace no small part of that instability in the pastoral office which has become a matter of general remark and lamentation, but for which no adequate remedy has yet been discovered.

We do not subscribe to the sentiments of a recent English reviewer upon this subject, unless they are received with many grains of allowance.

“It is one misfortune,” he remarks, “of a generally educated and highly polished state of society that men of the highest talent and most cultivated minds are often fettered by a delicate and timid sensitiveness, which renders them afraid of committing their reputation, or incurring the accusation of bad taste; and that, in consequence, they seldom venture beyond the verge of what is calm and equable either in writing or in speaking. They write with too much caution to be able to write with fire, and in trying to be safe, they fail to be impressive. And what is the consequence? Why, that those men dare the most who are least capable of daring with success. The style which is not hazarded at the church, is torn into tatters at the conventicle; and the magnificent imagery and

strong language of our old divines are succeeded by lachrymose harangues at a fashionable chapel, or the rhapsodical flights of the great Caledonian Apostle, who, for a time, drew ministers of state and leaders of *ton* from May Fair to Hatton Garden."

Now all this is based on the assumption that a truly enlightened audience is not liberal and just in its criticisms, — indeed, that it is captious in proportion to its intelligence. We will not be so unjust to intelligent men as to believe such a doctrine. A really enlightened mind is liberal and generous in its views. It will, if the heart be right, encourage, not repress, the most powerful enforcements of divine truth. We had much rather fall into the hands of such a large-hearted and intelligent catholicity, than into that narrow, flippant hypercriticism, which is too self-conceited to learn and too jealous to be just.

It is almost a truism to remark, that the literary character of the pulpit ought to rise in the ratio of the popular enlightenment. The style of Edwards and Owen and Charnock will not answer at the present day. The pulpit cannot maintain its hold upon the public mind unless it commands the public respect. It must, therefore, advance with the age ; and, instead of being jealous of the elevated literary taste of some of

the auditory, it ought to hail that taste as an important auxiliary to its own influence, and press forward in the career of improvement. The important truth would thus be illustrated, that an enlightened pulpit is both the cause and the effect of its own hallowed radiance.

Another class of faults pertain to *the manner of delivery*.

Appropriateness of gesture is a rhetorical grace which frequently receives little attention. We recently listened to a preacher who uniformly made an emphatic gesture in announcing the heads of his discourse. Such an announcement is impressive, if at all, by the terseness of the terms in which it is conveyed, or by the unexpected novelty and force of the thought itself. It does not suppose any unusual emotion in the speaker, or anything which calls for a gesture. On the contrary, the expectation of the audience forbids it. Another preacher we have heard, who extended his hand *upward* and with great violence, when he was describing his hearers as going down to hell.

Superabundance of gesture is often a fault, especially of young clergymen. In some cases it is so incessant, that, like the heat-lightning of summer, it neither warms nor alarms; and the hearer is led to ask himself, What can be the cause of

the preacher's unaccountable hostility to the "circumambient atmosphere?" Such excessive gesticulation is quite meaningless. Much of it is necessarily inappropriate, and therefore ineffective.

The entire absence of gesture is nearly as unphilosophical as its redundancy. Gesture is the language of nature. It is the common vernacular tongue of all nations. Savage as well as civilized men always use it when they are strongly moved. Like tears, it is the universal exponent of deep emotion. A statue in the pulpit would therefore be nearly as appropriate an incumbent of that sacred place, as a living preacher without action. President Edwards might hold an audience, in a discourse of an hour's length, without moving an arm or lifting a finger; but it was done by a cogency of logic, a strength of reasoning, and an impassioned earnestness, rarely equalled. It is an unquestionable fact, too, that Edwards himself would have been far more effective, if, to the force of his extraordinary argumentative powers, he had added a highly rhetorical manner. Plato says that the Greek Rhapsodists could not recite Homer without almost falling into convulsions. But Addison says of the preachers of his day: "They stand stock still in the pulpit, and

will not so much as move a finger to set off the best sermons in the world. An untravelled Englishman, who has not seen an Italian in the pulpit, will not know what to make of that noble gesture in Raphael's picture of St. Paul preaching at Athens, where the apostle is represented as lifting up both his arms and pouring out the thunder of his rhetoric amidst an audience of pagan philosophers." Appropriate gesticulation being, then, the enforcement which *nature* always gives to sentiments uttered under strong emotion, can never be neglected without impairing, most essentially, the impression of a discourse.

Sir Charles Bell has written an able work on "The Mechanism of the Human Hand," and we wish that some scientific rhetorician would prepare as excellent a treatise on its powers of expression. Next to the "human face divine," the hand is the most expressive part of our corporeal frame. The clenched fist, the pointing finger, the adoring hand, the imploring hand, the inviting and the repelling hand, are only a few of the numerous forms of speech it is able to assume. Strange as it may seem, some preachers never get command of their hands, and few have fully considered the great variety and the amazing strength of emotions they are

able to express. The almost total neglect of the moral power of the hand is one of the greatest defects in our systems of education. The preacher who carefully studies this subject, who rejects all uncouth and unappropriate gesticulation, and brings into habitual use all of its magic influence in moving an audience, will find that he has added a wonderful executive power to the eloquence of the pulpit.

Some clergymen, too, are in the habit of *praying with their eyes open*. This looks as if the suppliant thought more of his auditory than of "Him who hears prayer," and was more curious to see who are present, than anxious how he shall secure the ear of Heaven. This habit violates that nice sense of propriety which always exists in a cultivated religious assembly.

Others are in the habit of rarely *looking their audience directly in the face*. In the most impassioned parts of the discourse, their eyes are often mechanically averted from their hearers to certain quarters of the house, and cast a vacant stare at vacancy itself. No man can be truly eloquent under the dominion of such a habit. Real eloquence requires an active sympathy between the speaker and his audience. It is there, if anywhere, that heart meets heart and "deep calleth unto deep." Demosthenes was eloquent

when he was urging his countrymen to oppose the invasion of Philip, and when, by the fire of his eyes, as well as by the thunder of his voice, he electrified the martial spirit of the Athenians, and was, in turn, electrified by them; but he was not eloquent, when, with pebbles in his mouth, and with no living audience before him, to see and to be seen, to inspire and to be inspired, he harangued the waves of the ocean.

A proper degree of rapidity in the delivery of a discourse enters very deeply into its effectiveness. Young preachers are apt to be too rapid, and aged preachers too slow, in their enunciation. Constitutional temperament also materially affects the rate of delivery. Some are so phlegmatic that they seem never to have formed the acquaintanceship of emotion, and others are so intensely mercurial as to discredit their judgment. Either extreme is fatal to true eloquence.

A lack of judgment in *the selection of topics* for the pulpit, is sometimes another serious infelicity. The theory of some particular school of theology, metaphysics, politics, war, slavery, or other exciting topics of the day—form the staple of quite too many sermons. The theological views or notions of reform, which the hearers come to entertain, will, of course, be more or less distorted and crotchety

and controversial, and they will feel a stronger desire to pronounce correctly the Shibboleth of a party, than to embrace the "great salvation." The present alarming paucity of revivals of religion may be traced, it is believed, in no small part, to this cause. Subjects of exciting but secular interest have of late occupied so large and disproportioned a place in ministrations of the sanctuary, that we have little reason to expect the days of Griffin and Nettleton to return, till the pulpit is reformed, and the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of Christians come again to be its paramount and all-engrossing concern.

In the devotional exercises of the sanctuary, the prayers of some clergymen are little else than a *stereotyped formula of words*, from which the most extraordinary circumstances in the state of the congregation hardly induce them to deviate. Their hearers can predict beforehand, with great accuracy, how they will begin, and proceed, and end. The route over which they travel is well known, and the track thoroughly beaten. This practice may be illustrated by the anecdote of the boys, in the early days of New England, who absented themselves from the worship of the family, but who, to avoid merited punishment, intended to enter the room just

before their father had finished his supplications. As they approached the house, one of them went up to the window to listen. "John," said the other, "has father got nearly through?" "O no," was the reply, "we can play a good while longer; he has n't got to the *Jews* yet."

Similar instances of misjudgment are very frequently seen in the practice of giving out a much larger proportion of *hymns to be sung than of psalms*. The hymns, in our books of psalmody, are perhaps adapted to a greater variety of occasions than the psalms; but for the ordinary purposes of devotion, the psalms, being more lyrical and more instinct with the spirit of holy praise, are much superior. Yet, in some pulpits, the use of the psalms is nearly discontinued, to the great detriment of spirituality in the churches.

The last class of faults in the pulpit to which we shall refer, may be denominated *aesthetical*. They belong to the general appearance of the preacher as he presents himself before his congregation, and may inhere in his gait, his dress, his wide-awake hat, his shawl, his large white handkerchief displayed on the top of the pulpit, his mode of enunciation and pronunciation, and his general bearing in conducting the services of the sanctuary. These infelicities of manner are too "numerous to mention." We would not,

indeed, stretch or cut down the physical or mental idiosyncrasies of different men to any Procrustean dimensions. We admire nature in the pulpit. We would have every preacher be himself, and not another. We have no patience with the attempts often made by third or fourth rate men to ape the manners of their superiors. They are always failures, and failures which render such men ridiculous.

But the credit and influence of the clergy imperatively demand, that all those habits which savor of the affected, the uncouth, and the clownish; — all those manners, which, by common consent, are deemed inconsistent with the sobriety and dignity of the sacred office; — all those improprieties of bearing which offend good taste and serious piety, be forever discarded from the pulpit. We are well aware that habits are indeed “second natures.” They are inveterate. It is not easy for the “Ethiopian to change his skin, or the leopard his spots.” And yet we confess our surprise that some clergymen are so neglectful of their duty in these matters, so inattentive to their habits in the pulpit, that they seem to cherish them the more for the remonstrances they receive from their intelligent hearers and their clerical brethren. They seem to think that all attention to *manner* in the pulpit

is beneath the dignity of their holy vocation, and inconsistent with fidelity to God and the souls of men. But this impression betrays more of the spirit of self-complacency, than of that due regard to public sentiment which is characteristic of all truly independent minds. A persistent inattention to blemishes, often pointed out, will be likely soon to leave a man behind his age. The world will go on without him; and before he has lived out half his days, he finds himself displaced from his parish, and unable to find another where his offensive habits will be tolerated.

In closing this article we cannot but express the hope, that these criticisms will be regarded as emanating only from the purest friendship for the clergy. They are one of the brightest ornaments of the age, but we would have it immaculate. We hope, too, that none will suppose that we attach a higher importance to *manner* in the pulpit, than to the *matter* which is there presented. We go for strong, masculine good sense, for cogent argument, for solid learning, and for an earnest enforcement of the great doctrines of grace. But we have long been persuaded, that, if to all these there could be added a highly finished elocution, the ministrations of the pulpit would be incomparably more

successful. The late Dr. Porter, of Andover, was, perhaps, as faultless a model as our country has produced, but we care not how many of the clergy rival the more magnificent rhetoric of Griffin. Society must be taken as it is. With the indiscriminating multitude, manner has far greater influence than the purest doctrine. Even tinsel is sometimes more fascinating than diamonds. While, then, "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith," should ever occupy the first place in the thoughts of God's ambassadors, their success in urging these momentous themes may depend entirely, under Him, upon the *modus* in which it is done.

The following anecdote of Robert Roberts, one of the great Welsh evangelists, is a fitting illustration of the high importance of *manner* to power in the pulpit. On one occasion he was preaching in Anglesea, and two boys, one of whom had never seen him, went to hear him. When Roberts rose, there was an intense earnestness in his countenance. He read his text, but appeared embarrassed. Soon, however, he recovered himself, his utterance became easier, his voice clearer, and his look more and more vehement. He went on, seized fast hold of the very soul of the assembly and swayed it to and fro as the hurricane the forest; some fainted, others

cried aloud, and he himself, with a voice like God's trumpet, thrilled the audience through and through. The boy who had never heard him before, with face as pale as a corpse, turned to his companion and asked, "Is he a man or an angel?" "Why! an angel; did n't you know?" "No, indeed, I did n't know. Great heaven! but how much better an angel preaches than a man!"





THE MERITS OF THE SABBATH HYMN BOOK.

BY PROFESSORS PARK, PHELPS, AND MASON,

AND OF THE

MEANS WHICH ARE EMPLOYED TO INTRO-
DUCE IT INTO THE CHURCHES.¹

IN common with many others, we have received a pamphlet of forty-eight pages, from Mason Brothers, New York, entitled, "An Advertisement, with Opinions from Distinguished Sources, and Notices from Periodicals, of *The Sabbath Hymn Book*," published by the same house. The pamphlet is made up principally of the recommendations of various clergymen, to whom copies of the book had been sent, and their opinions of its character requested. The discerning public, which is a party most deeply

¹ This Article, which originally appeared in a pamphlet form, was prepared and read before an Association of Ministers, in the ordinary course of their literary exercises. The members unanimously requested that it might be given to the public.

interested in the question of the acceptance or rejection of a new manual of praise in our churches, will of course give due credit to the recommendations of distinguished men, after considering the circumstances under which they have been obtained. That those before us were *solicited*, and not spontaneously offered, can admit of no doubt, and that recommendations of almost anything and in any quantity, can be easily procured, is a matter of every-day remark. But the fair exhibit which we now propose to make of the *Subject of Church Psalmody* requires us to say, and we say it with all sincerity, that Mason Brothers have the same right to obtain recommendations of their books in this way, and then, in turn, to publish them to the world, for the purpose of manufacturing a public sentiment in favor of their wares, as any other book-selling establishment in the country. Whether it be in good taste or in bad taste, whether it is dealing with the public fairly or unfairly, they have as good a right as others to create a market for their books in this form. This course has long been practised by the trade; indeed, all who are acquainted with the facts in such cases know that it is what is familiarly called "one of the tricks of the trade." We therefore entirely exonerate Mason Brothers from the suspicion

that they have taken any unusual course in sounding their trumpet in favor of the Sabbath Hymn Book.

Nor do we think that the course of Mason Brothers, in sending a copy of the book to such men, as, by their official, or social, or theological, or blood relations to the editors, might be expected, *a priori*, to return a favorable response, is an unusual one. For who could better be expected to respond favorably, than those whose affiliations with the parties concerned are of the most intimate character? This is in entire harmony with the dictates of human nature. Whether this was the wisest course, if the object were to obtain opinions of the book which are purely *unbiased*, is another question; but no question at all, if the object was to obtain favorable opinions at any rate. It is therefore our judgment that the house of Mason Brothers understand their business, and that they have resorted to no unusual means to give a wide and favorable publicity to the Sabbath Hymn Book.

But, with all these admissions, we still hold that this sort of machinery for selling books is a virtual, if not an actual imposition upon the public. If a book possesses intrinsic merit, and especially if its merits place it unquestionably

above all others of its kind, the ordinary means of advertising in the newspapers will soon disclose the fact to the world, and the demand for it will shortly equal its merits. The enginery employed to get the Sabbath Hymn Book favorably before the community, though not unusual, is highly questionable on moral grounds; and, besides, it is a sort of confession, on the part of the publishers, that it has not merit enough of its own to make its way to the patronage of the public. The extreme pains they have taken to forestall public sentiment in behalf of this book, by soliciting the opinions of some seventy clergymen, is presumptive evidence of their apprehension, that, without such special effort, it may long encumber the shelves of their warehouse.

Let us now pass to an examination of some of the recommendations themselves. And here we premise, that, in our opinion, the preparation of a Hymn Book for our churches, — a book which is to affect the taste and modify the piety of all succeeding generations, — is an undertaking of the very gravest character. And scarcely less impressive is the responsibility of giving currency to such a book, by a deliberate recommendation of it to the churches. It is comparatively *irresponsible* to recommend almost any other book,

for if the public find it to be worthless, or even injurious, it can easily be laid aside, or, in the order of events, it will be superseded by the next newest book, which will be sure to appear next week. Not so, however, with a new Hymn Book for use in our churches. Such books, we are glad to know, are slowly and cautiously adopted, but when they are adopted, they are perhaps as reluctantly abandoned, even though they are found to be quite unfit for their purpose. And, besides, the *expense* of a new book for an entire congregation, — amounting in most cases to some hundreds, and in many cases to some thousands of dollars, — is an item in the account which is by no means to be overlooked. The formal recommendation of a new Hymn Book is, therefore, a matter of the most serious responsibility; and no man, with all this responsibility before him, can possibly give such a recommendation in haste, or with levity or partiality.

In the light of these general and obvious principles, let us look at some of the recommendations in the pamphlet before us, and try to ascertain their *actual* value, and the weight they ought to have with the public.

One pastor says, “I have not had opportunity to compare it (the Sabbath Hymn Book) with

some other hymn books lately published, *nor do I care to.*" This is perhaps the coolest recommendation of all. But with what propriety, and, we will ask, *with what sense*, can a man recommend any book as the very best in the market, when he admits that he has "not compared it with others" of its class, and flippantly tells the public that he "does not care to" do so? Is the intelligence of the Christian community to be thus cavalierly addressed, and is it to be thus wantonly underrated? If a man does not respect himself, he ought at least to profess some respect for others, whom he would influence by his opinions. But does he expect that his *dictum* will be accepted by the churches as an intelligent indorsement of the book, when he glories in the confession that he has not "compared" it with others, and with singular effrontery tells us, that, if he had the time and opportunity, he would not desire to make such a comparison? The real value of such testimony is easily estimated.

Another pastor, after a most unqualified recommendation of the work, says: "I rejoice to believe that our unquiet hymnology will now have rest for a whole generation. He must be a fastidious man, who, having seen this book, shall wait for a better; he must be a bold man

who shall offer the public another during the present century."

If the commendation by the clergyman first mentioned is sufficiently cool, this, it must be admitted, is sufficiently extravagant. If our hymnology for some time past has been "unquiet," we ask, Where are the symptoms that it is now subsiding into repose? for it is patent to the most casual observer, that, since the publication of the *Sabbath Hymn Book*, a more active and heated discussion of the whole subject of "our hymnology" has been awakened, than has occurred for a century before. The new *Hymn Book* has warm friends, and equally warm opposers. Some pastors (we hope the number is small) would introduce it into their churches at once, and without "caring to compare its merits" with those of others; but many more will never introduce it at all. Such is the "godly jealousy" of many pastors and many churches upon a subject so vital as this to a healthful religious progress, that we expect that the hymn books lately published, and all others which anybody may be "bold" enough to "offer the public during the present century," will be subjected to a far more rigorous examination than has heretofore befallen this class of publications. It seems to us, with all these facts

in view, that, whether for good or evil, our "unquiet hymnology," instead of being put to "rest" by the appearance of the Sabbath Hymn Book, is likely to become more disturbed than ever.

With regard to the remark of this pastor, "he must be a fastidious man, who, having seen this book, shall wait for a better, and he must be a bold man who shall offer the public another during the present century," we have only to say, that sober sense is sacrificed to an oracular Johnsonian antithesis — that the rhetoric is better than the judgment.

Some of the recommendations in this pamphlet were written with evident caution, and with many qualifying and saving epithets, which do credit to the judgment and prudence of their authors. Others speak of the book in that generalizing way which says that the writers are unwilling to withhold a recommendation, and about as unwilling to give it; and others commend it for the value of its elaborate indexes, its devotional spirit, its doctrinal accuracy, and the large number of hymns which contain direct addresses to God.

With respect to the *poetical and lyrical* characteristics of this book, which, next to its religious, are confessedly of the highest importance,

one pastor says, "there are *no* hymns which cannot be used," and "there does not seem to be a *single* hymn which the most fastidious taste could refuse to use in the house of the Lord." Another affirms it to be "*free* from antiquated lumber." Others, with more discrimination, commend, in general, its adaptedness to musical expression and effect. It is to be remembered, however, that some of the books now in use in our sanctuaries were prepared with special reference to this latter point, and possess, in that regard, high degrees of merit.

As to the very numerous *alterations* of hymns in this volume, the writers in the pamphlet under consideration express a wide variety of opinion. One of them says, "I am against *all mutilations* of hymns, from beginning to end." Another says, "the editors have not made *an alteration which I have reason to regret.*" Another remarks that "the alterations of original hymns are *very rare and judicious.*" Another says, "they are not mutilated by *needless* alterations. Where it was *possible* to retain the author's own words, they have been, *as a general thing*, retained." This last expression means, if it means anything, that, in those few cases where it was *not possible* to retain the author's own words, they have nevertheless been retained. To such ver-

biage, or rather nonsense, as this, is a sensible man driven, in his special pleading in defence of the many hundreds of alterations which are found in the Sabbath Hymn Book.

But this pastor says, the hymns "have not been mutilated by *needless* alterations." But who is to judge what were *needed* or not? Why, he will doubtless reply, "the editors themselves must be the judges;" which is the same as to say that all the alterations which they have made, were necessary to be made, because they *thought* them necessary to be made. This is reasoning in a circle with a vengeance. It is the same as saying, the editors are to be justified in their numerous mutilations, *because they have made them*. It is bringing the *cause* to justify the *effect*. According to this logic, *any* effect can be justified which any man may see fit to perpetrate. If, in his estimation, a thing is *necessary* to be done, it is therefore, *ipso facto*, *to be* done.

The "New York Musical Review," of which Mr. Lowell Mason, who is one of the editors of this Hymn Book, is also one of the conductors, in a review which is copied by his sons into this pamphlet, not only justifies all the alterations of the hymns, but wishes that many more had been made.

It is quite evident, from this wide discrepancy of views upon the propriety of altering the literary productions of others, that *the whole subject* of such revisions needs a thorough and fundamental examination. There is a question of *moral honesty* underlying this practice, upon which we hope some casuist will soon appear to enlighten the world. To mutilate the productions of the departed, who have given them their most careful consideration, and left them in just the state in which they wished them to appear to all subsequent generations, is, in our judgment, little else than literary felony. And this is the conclusion to which it would seem that all honest and intelligent men must come, when the subject has been duly examined in the light of its moral aspects.

Let us now proceed to an examination of the book itself. Whatever may be the general principles which should guide compilers in mutilating the productions of others, if such mutilations can ever be justified, *specific cases* can be judged of by those canons of criticism which have stood the test of time, and which are accepted by all literary men. To these canons we now propose to bring some of the multiform alterations which we have noticed in the Sabbath Hymn Book. Nor can the oft-quoted maxim, *Nil disputandum*

de gustibus, be admitted to set aside the decisions of common sense and acknowledged literary propriety. If some alterations are admissible, it is at any rate clear that they ought not to be carried so far, as has been done in some cases in this book, that the reputed author, were he alive, could not recognize his own productions; and it is equally clear, that, after they have been so changed that he would not know them himself, it is a gross fraud and abuse to credit him with their paternity. Thus, Pope's magnificent poem on the "Messiah," written in lines of ten syllables, is reduced to a long-metre hymn of remarkable tameness, and then, as if to add insult to injury, the emasculated production is ascribed to Pope himself. With what just indignation would that great poet, if he could now appear on the earth, remonstrate against the injustice done to his fame, by such an entire remoulding of that splendid work, and the ascription to him of a bantling, from which every sensibility of his fine poetic taste would have recoiled.

Equally unpardonable is the alteration of Mrs. Steele's sweet and highly lyrical hymn, —

"The Saviour! Oh! what endless charms."

The first three stanzas of this hymn, which are among the most beautiful in the language,

and have long been associated in the minds of Christians with their holiest enjoyments, both in the sanctuary and the closet,—have been entirely omitted; and three others, new, strange, and every way inferior, have been substituted in their place. And this substitution has been made, as it appears to us, not only in violation of every dictate of correct taste, but in violation, too, of the excellent rule laid down by the editors themselves in their Introduction, that, in a manual of worship, other things being equal, those hymns should be preferred “which are direct addresses to the Most High.” In this case they have discarded the greater part of a hymn which opens with a sublime apostrophe of the “Saviour,” and substituted stanzas which contain no address to Him, “direct” or indirect. And yet, as if to make inconsistency the rule and not the exception, they ascribe the new hymn to “Mrs. Steele!” It is difficult to characterize such radical alterations of hymns as these, in the proper phrases of disapproval, without exposing one’s self, however unjustly, to the cant reproach of being “captious” or “carping.” We hope to employ only the most courteous euphemism, whenever we are compelled to express our dissent from the taste and judgment of these eminent compilers.

In Montgomery's sublime pæan,

“Hark! the song of Jubilee,”

we find the line,

“With illimitable sway,”

altered, as it was in the Church Psalmody of which Mr. Lowell Mason was one of the editors, into the pleonasm,

“With supreme, unbounded sway.”

A sway which is “supreme,” is “unbounded,” of course.

And, in like manner, in Robinson's fine hymn, so redolent of the Christian's gratitude for salvation by grace,

“Come, thou Fount of every blessing,”

the stanza,

“Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of Thy redeeming love;”

is changed into the following:—

“Teach me some melodious measure,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Oh the vast, the boundless treasure
Of Thy free, unchanging love.”

In respect of spirit and genuine eloquence, this alteration clearly belongs in the category of “reduction descending.”

The editors especially deprecate “*rhythmical sermons*, narrative, expository, or didactic” in a hymn book; and yet we find in their book a much larger number of hymns than in any other with which we are acquainted, where all lyrical expression is destroyed, by attempting to cramp the doctrines of Calvinism into the rhythm of poetic numbers. In the following cases, we have three “rhythmical sermons” on the *atonement* : —

“ His cross was ours, and we with Him
Were buried in one grave.”

“ Thou to our woe who down didst come,
Who one with us wouldst be.”

“ Such was Thy grace, that for our sakes
Thou didst from heaven come down,
Our mortal flesh and blood partake,
In all our misery one.”

Please attend, now, to a “rhythmical sermon” on *disinterested love to God* : —

“ I love Thee, O my God, but not
For what I hope thereby;
Nor yet because who love Thee not
Must die eternally.
I love Thee, O my God, and still
I ever will love Thee,
Solely because my God Thou art
Who first hast loved me.

" Then shall I not, O Saviour mine !
 Shall I not love Thee well ?
 Not with the hope of winning heaven,
 Nor of escaping hell ;
 Not with the hope of earning aught,
 Nor seeking a reward ;
 But freely, fully, as Thyself
 Hast loved me, O Lord ! "

We doubt whether Hopkins or Bellamy could have adjusted all these points, with more formal accuracy or more prosaic stiffness, in their " didactic " sermons.

In all these cases, and in several others, the " singing " most clearly "*preaches*," in violation of the editors' own rule, and of all correct taste. If such stanzas are " the true outflowings of sacred poetry," then all the established canons of judgment are at fault. If " men sing them because they *must* sing them," we think the *necessity* which is laid upon us is of a direr sort than Augustine, or Calvin, or Edwards ever dreamed of.

To say nothing of the *poetry* of the following couplet, which is bad enough, if anybody will point out its *sense* to us, we will confess to his superior penetration : —

" He can *suffice* to these good things,
 Whose mind with Christ is one."

And we will make a similar acknowledgment,

if any one will do us the like favor with regard to the following stanza : —

“ But not this fleshly robe alone
Shall link us, Lord, to Thee ;
Nor always in the tear and groan,
Shall the dear kindred be.”

How elevated and correct could that taste for lyric poetry have been, which admitted into the book such lines as these : —

“ Thou *tookest* woe and death from us,
And we receive Thy heaven.”

“ Lord, am I precious in Thy sight ?
Lord, wouldst thou have me Thine ? ”

“ Lord, dost Thou sweetly urge and press
My soul Thy heaven to win.”

“ Lord, dost Thou love my holiness ?
Lord, dost Thou love my sin.”

The following specimen, and very many others, belong to the same order of taste : —

“ Brightest of all on earth that 's bright,
Come *shine away* my sin.”

Whether the process of “ *shining away sin* ” is a moral, or astronomical, or physiological process, we are quite in doubt. It has long been a problem among theologians how sin got into the world, but this certainly must be regarded as a novel method of getting it out.

“O everlasting Truth!
Truest of all that’s true.”

“In life or death, I take my *stand*
Where I have *ever* stood.”

Are *tautologies* specially lyrical or poetical? If not, why have they been so numerous introduced, in defiance of the most elementary principles of rhetoric?

By what contorted adjustment of the vocal organs, can any congregation or choir sing the following stanza:—

“Yes, o’er me, o’er me He watcheth,
Ceaseless watcheth, night and day;
Yes, ev’n me, ev’n me, He snatcheth
From the perils of the way.”

Or the following line:—

“Ah! Grace, into *unlikeliest* hearts.”

It is a noticeable fact, that many of the poorest hymns in this collection are new and anonymous. The authors evidently have shown more wisdom in suppressing their names, than skill in manufacturing their poetry. If, by some *Index Expurgatorius*, this book could be relieved of two hundred hymns, of these *outré* characteristics, it would be a grand deliverance.

The editors felicitate the public that they have introduced several *ancient* hymns. The thought was a good one. “Hymns of the Ages”—

commemorating some great historical events in the church of God, fragrant with the aroma of a simpler piety, sounding along the galleries of time, and inviting the choral responses of the world now half covered with Christians,—would, indeed, enrich any collection. Perhaps the best of the very few of this description, which we find in the *Sabbath Hymn Book*, is the *Battle-song of Gustavus Adolphus*, which was sung by him at the head of his army, on the morning of the day when he fell at Lutzen, in 1631. For the purpose of ascertaining the merits of the translation of this hymn, we must quote it at length; and also the version of it which appears in the “*Lyra Germanica*,” recently published:—

The Editors' Translation.

“ Fear not, O little flock, the foe
Who madly seeks your overthrow ;
Dread not his rage and power ;
What though your courage sometimes faints !
This seeming triumph o’er God’s saints,
Lasts but a little hour.

“ Fear not ! be strong ! your cause belongs
To Him who can avenge your wrongs ;
Leave all to Him, your Lord ;
Though hidden yet from mortal eyes,
Salvation shall for you arise ;
He girdeth on His sword.

“ As sure as God’s own promise stands,
 Not earth, nor hell, with all their bands,
 Against us shall prevail ;
 The Lord shall mock him from His throne ;
 God is with us, we are His own ;
 Our victory cannot fail !

“ Amen ! Lord Jesus, grant our prayer ;
 Great Captain ! now Thine arm make bare ;
 Thy church with strength defend ;
 So shall all saints and martyrs raise
 A joyful chorus to Thy praise,
 Through ages without end.”

Translation of the “Lyra Germanica.”

“ Fear not, O little flock, the foe
 Who madly seeks your overthrow ;
 Dread not his rage and power ;
 What though your courage sometimes faints !
 His seeming triumph o’er God’s saints
 Lasts but a little hour.

“ Be of good cheer ! your cause belongs
 To Him who can avenge your wrongs ;
 Leave it to Him, our Lord.
 Though hidden yet from all our eyes,
 He sees the Gideon who shall rise
 To save us and His word.

“ As true as God’s own word is true,
 Not earth nor hell, with all their crew,
 Against us shall prevail ;
 A jest and by-word are they grown,
 God is with us, we are His own ;
 Our victory cannot fail.

“Amen! Lord Jesus, grant our prayer!
Great Captain! now Thine arm make bare!
Fight for us once again!
So shall Thy saints and martyrs raise
A mighty chorus to Thy praise,
World without end, Amen!”

Nearly every variation between these versions is in favor of the latter.

“*His* seeming triumph,” is much better than “*This* seeming triumph,” both because it is more definite, and because it refers directly to the personal antecedent, — “the foe.”

“Be of good cheer,” is an expression much more characteristic of those early times, than that of the editors, and it also avoids a repetition of the first words of the hymn. “Leave *it* to Him,” is decidedly better than “Leave *all* to Him.”

“He sees the Gideon who shall rise
To save us and His word,”

is also much more in harmony with the mental associations of the Reformers, whose minds were full of the names and incidents in the Scriptures, than is the generalizing couplet in the Sabbath Hymn Book. The lines,

“As true as God’s own word is true,
Not earth and hell with all their crew.”

“A jest and by-word they have grown,”

also harmonize much better with the diction of olden times, than the corresponding ones in the Hymn Book.

On the morning before a battle,

“Fight for us once again!”

is a much more natural prayer than the general one,

“Thy church with strength defend.”

“A *mighty* chorus,” is unquestionably superior to a “joyful” one, because we always expect that choruses will be “joyful after a victory,” but not always *powerful*.

It is altogether surprising to us, that gentlemen who have occupied, or now occupy, the chair of Griffin and Porter — the Cicero and Quintilian of our pulpits — have inherited so little of their exquisite critical taste, as to have admitted into the Sabbath Hymn Book a greater number of rhetorical blemishes, we must take the liberty to say though it is with pain, than can be found in any other since the days of Sternhold and Hopkins.

But the editors of this book have a strong “proclivity” for emending the best lyric poets in our language. We have seen what they have done for Pope and Montgomery, let us now look at their success upon Addison and Heber, Cow-

per and Watts. In Addison's sweetly flowing and inimitable idyl,

"The Lord my pasture shall prepare,"

"friendly *crook*" is altered into "friendly *rod*," when every one knows that "crooks," and not "rods," are always used by shepherds in superintending their flocks. We are sorry to have that delightful bucolic, — in which the poet so admirably avails himself of the habits of pastoral life in the East, to set forth the care of the Great Shepherd over his people, — marred by the substitution of an occidental for an oriental figure.

In Bishop Heber's Missionary Hymn, the line

"Till *earth's* remotest nation,"

is altered on this wise: —

"Till *each* remotest nation."

It is understood that the editors defend this, as the original reading of the hymn. But is it to be believed, that a scholar, so eminent as Heber was in every department of letters, could have allowed a line to go from his pen, in which the plainest principles of grammar are violated?

In Cowper's precious hymn,

"There is a Fountain filled with blood,"

the last stanza, as it came from his exquisite taste, reads as follow: —

“Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.”

In the Sabbath Hymn Book we find the following transposition of the couplets, and change of reading:—

“And when this feeble, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing Thy power to save.”

The idea of the poet evidently was, that in our present state of imperfection and sin, we cannot express, in proper tones, the Redeemer’s “power to save.” Now the natural *impediments* to speech are “lisping” and “stammering,” and not “feebleness.” A man may speak *distinctly*, though he is “feeble,” but never when he “lisps” or “stammers.” With the truest philosophy as well as taste, the poet has selected these two *impediments*, and by them has represented our inability, adequately to set forth the power and glory of the Saviour. The substitution of “feeble” for “lisping,” is also objectionable on logical grounds. “Feeble” is a generic, but “lisping” is a specific term. Specific terms are always the most forcible, both in eloquence and in song, and on that account the poet has greatly the advantage of his emendators. For

these reasons, which we think are irrefragable, the change is to be reprobated and the original reading ought to be restored.

As it regards the *transposition of the couplets* in this stanza, the taste of the compilers is equally at fault. It must have been made, we should judge, either because they thought the *order of events*, or the *climax*, or *both*, required it. In the order of events it is indeed certain, that Christians cannot begin the song of heaven till *after* their death; but the conception of the poet, we think, had not reference so much to the order of time, as to the *amazing contrast* between the ability of the song of heaven and the songs of earth, to set forth the Redeemer's praise; — a contrast which he skilfully heightens, by bringing the mind *unexpectedly back*, from the free-spoken, triumphant alleluias of the skies, to the utter silence of the tongue in the grave. And the real climax in this case, requires that arrangement of the couplets which Cowper himself preferred. In the judgment of many, the power of climax always depends upon the *quantity of sound*. According to that judgment, the greater the *noise*, the greater the *impression*. And it is freely admitted, that in many cases, *noise* is the element of the 'greatest potency; and hence it is, that the thunder of the deepest-toned or-

gans is thought to be indispensable to the highest rhetorical effect of the songs of the sanctuary. According to the popular taste, the *major* is more powerful than the *minor*. But while admitting that it is so in many cases, we are far from believing that it is always so, as a normal fact. The case under consideration has always appeared to us a marked and splendid example of the contrary. A finished performance of this stanza, in the order the poet has left it, commencing with the sonorous acclamation,

“ Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing Thy power to save ; ”

and running down into the pathetic and scarcely audible minor, —

“ When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave ; ”

cannot fail to find its way to the place of tears, and send any congregation to God with thanksgivings for redeeming grace.

In the fifty-first Psalm, Watts has this stanza : —

“ Behold, I fall before Thy face,
My only refuge is Thy grace ;
No outward forms can make me clean,
The leprosy lies deep within.”

The editors have changed it into the following : —

“Behold, I fall before Thy face,
My only refuge is Thy grace ;
Great God ! create my heart anew,
And form my spirit pure and true.”

The substitution of these lines *breaks the continuity of the thought*, which is the inefficacy of “outward forms” to cleanse us from sin, — a thought which is continued under more specific terms in the next stanza: —

“No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,” etc.

Now the Sabbath Hymn Book *interrupts this train of thought* by interposing two lines of entirely different import, and with characteristic taste, changes again *specific* for *general* expressions; — the “outward forms” and the “leprosy,” for a common prayer for regeneration. Very few confessions come welling up from a profounder depth in the hearts of Christians, or are oftener on their lips, than this, —

“No outward forms can make me clean,
The leprosy lies deep within ;”

and we are extremely unwilling to have this very formula of words, so precious to all good men, by disuse in our churches, gradually fade away from the memory of the world.

This is one of several cases where Watts has been altered to the decided injury of correct taste and poetic beauty.

But it gives us far more pleasure to commend where we *can*, than to find fault where we *must*. Some of the alterations in the Sabbath Hymn Book are obvious and important improvements, if alterations are admissible at all.

“ The Son of God in tears,
Angels with wonder see,”

is changed into the following, where the accen-
tuation is much improved:—

“ The Son of God in tears
The wondering angels see.”

So, for the lines of Doddridge, —

“ Then, speechless, clasp Thee in my arms,
The antidote of death ;” —

we have, —

“ Then, speechless, clasp Thee in my arms,
The conqueror of death.”

An “antidote” *counteracts* or *prevents* an evil; a “conqueror” *overcomes* it. The Saviour does not *prevent* death, but He can give us the *victory* over it.

This couplet of Fawcett is decidedly benefited, —

“ In pain you travail all your days,
To reap immortal woe.”

It is changed for

“ In pain you travel all your days,
To reap eternal woe.”

The figure, running through this hymn, of *travelling on a road*, shows that the change was desirable.

On a *resumé* of the character of the Sabbath Hymn Book, in our judgment, there is considerable in it to commend, but much more to disapprove. Our wonder is, that, with all the facilities which the respected editors possessed, and with their acknowledged ability in other departments of criticism, they have not produced a much better book. The great merit of the volume consists in the *Introduction*, which is very ably and skilfully drawn; in the *Indexes*, which are far more elaborate and complete than in any other hymn book before the public; in the *philosophical arrangement* of the subjects, which leaves nothing to be desired; and in the *evangelical character* of its contents, which, after a very thorough examination, we think must be quite satisfactory to all "schools" of theology in New England.

But valuable as are all these characteristics of the book, none of them, except the last, are *vital* to its usefulness "for the service of song in the house of the Lord." They are only *accessories* to the main object of a hymn book. We do not *sing* introductions, nor indexes, nor philosophical order. We sing "psalms, and hymns,

and spiritual songs." The editors of this volume are evidently much more at home in making these important *adjuncts*, than in compiling the *body proper* of the book. Their professional studies are of the severer kind. Reasoning from their mental habits, *they have succeeded just where we should expect them to succeed, and have failed just where we might have expected they would fail.* Poetry, clearly, is not their *forte*.

We regard Worcester's Watts and Select Hymns, and the Congregational Hymn Book, on the score of good taste and sound theology, as the best books of the kind now before the public; but if the churches are not fully satisfied with them, we hope that some man, competent to the task, or some men, by a union of counsels, taking advantage of the mistakes which are so numerous and glaring in the selections and alterations in the Sabbath Hymn Book, will be "bold" enough to make a much better one, and "offer it to the public" as early as possible "during the present century."¹

¹ In March, 1864, five years after this review originally appeared, Rev. Nehemiah Adams, D. D., of Boston, not having the fear of one of the recommenders of the Sabbath Hymn Book before his eyes, published his "*Church Pastorals*." Dr. Adams has restored the original readings of the hymns which had been mutilated in the Sabbath Hymn Book and Church Psalmody, and, for good taste in the selections, it is a decided improvement upon those volumes.



RETURN TO THE SANCTUARY.

The following hymn was sung at the re-opening of the Trinitarian
Congregational Church, in Waltham, December 5th, 1858.

WITH joy did Israel hope,
While in oppression still,
To see their Temple rise from dust,
On Zion's chosen hill.

To see the courts of God,
How oft did David long,
To hear the thundering organ's peal,
And join the choral song.

Lift up your hearts, ye saints,
And send your pæans high,
The gates of Zion open wide
For your return to-day.

The glad Evangel sounds :
Let thronging thousands come,
And find these Renovated Courts,
Their birthplace and their home.

And when these Sabbaths close,
May heavenly visions rise,
And this assembled host adore,
In Temples of the skies.



THE

ALLEGED PROGRESS IN THEOLOGY.

IT has come to be a matter of frequent remark, that we live in an age of great progress in theology, and that similar progress is hereafter to be expected. It is time to examine this impression, that we may ascertain what elements in it are true, and what are false, so that we may know whether we are tending towards views of Scriptural truth which are really more intelligent and sound, or abandoning those which are correct for those which are doubtful and erroneous. If we mistake not, this opinion is held by many of the younger clergy of the present day, but is not concurred in, to much extent, by the middle-aged and older members of the clerical profession, or by the churches. Quite recently we propounded the question to a young pastor of more than average intelligence, and his prompt reply was, that he believed that "great progress has been made in theology *even within the last ten years.*" We deem it safe then to assume,

that this impression is quite current among us; and as Bacon long ago remarked, that the principles of the young men of a nation decide its destiny, so this opinion of our young theologians may lead to results which will seriously affect the best interests of the churches. While we heartily abjure that spirit of heresy-hunting which seeks to promote groundless divisions, or which would subserve mere partisan interests, we hold it to be the duty of every friend of Zion to "contend earnestly," and yet in the spirit of the Gospel, "for the faith once delivered to the saints,"—a "faith" which was as perfect when it was "delivered" as it is now, or ever will be, under the highest culture which humanity will attain. Alexander Hamilton profoundly said, that "jealousy is often the surest proof of strong attachment."

There are at least four distinct grounds on which the opinion now under consideration is based, and to which it may be well briefly to advert, before we enter upon the examination of the subject itself.

1. The great frequency with which the remark of John Robinson is quoted from his valedictory address to the Pilgrims at Delft Haven, that he was confident "God had more light in his Word which he would cause to break forth,"

indicates that this has had no little influence in diffusing, if not creating, the impression to which we refer. This remark of Robinson, it should be remembered, however, had, probably, exclusive reference to points of church order and liberty of conscience — questions which at that time were warmly discussed, and not to the central truths of dogmatic theology. It was not difference of opinion upon those truths, which separated the Puritans from the Established Church of England, or sent them to Leyden, or brought them to Plymouth. Robinson, Goodwin, Owen, and their compeers among the Independents, heartily held the doctrines of the Westminster Confession, and even those of the Thirty-Nine Articles. Robinson's celebrated remark has, therefore, no relevancy to the subject before us.

2. The progress which has been made, in past ages, in the construction of creeds, has also had its influence. Though Augustine held many of the doctrines which we hold, they have, since his day, been digested into more systematic and scientific forms. The Nicene Creed, as compared with the Apostles' Creed, shows great advance in a formal statement of Christian doctrine. The Augsburg Confession, drawn up by Luther and Melancthon, in 1530, was another

step of progress particularly in relation to the real substitution, and vicarious sacrifice of Christ, and the necessity, freeness, and efficacy of divine grace. The Synod of Dort, in 1619, defined, with still greater accuracy, the important difference between the doctrines of Calvinism and Arminianism; and finally, the Westminster Assembly, in 1643, formed a Confession of Faith, which, for comprehensiveness, symmetry, and soundness, had never been equalled, and which has scarcely been improved, in the slightest particular, to the present time. The Cambridge Platform in 1648, the Savoy Confession, in 1658, the Boston Confession in 1680, and the Saybrook Platform in 1708, are, with but a few quite unimportant exceptions, mere reaffirmations, and in almost *ipsissimis verbis*, of the doctrines of the Westminster Confession. Edwards and Bellamy, Hopkins and Dwight, Neander and Olshausen, have made scarcely any perceptible progress beyond the wonderful general accuracy of the Westminster Confession; and to-day, there is no creed in Old or New England, which is so well known, or regarded as of so high authority, or is so generally appealed to as the standard of orthodoxy, as this Confession, framed 217 years ago. Even on those points, with which divines of the "progressive" school

have found the most fault, such as the divine predestination of "whatsoever comes to pass," the moral connection of the human race with our first parents, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers, after all their most elaborate efforts to substitute phraseology more in harmony, as they conceived, with the teachings of the Bible, they have produced nothing which has met with any permanent public favor. Learning, wit, ridicule, acumen, have expended their united powers upon the averments of the Assembly on those points, and have in vain attempted to frame others, to be accepted by the churches. Probably no statement in the Assembly's Confession or Catechism has encountered such fierce opposition from the modern school, as that relating to the connection between Adam and his posterity. But notwithstanding that opposition, including the sneer, so often repeated, that "the covenants were all made in Holland," God *did* enter into some sort of covenant, plan, or arrangement with Adam, call it by what term you please, by which he became the head or representative of his posterity; a covenant, plan, or arrangement, to which he was a party, and by which the moral character and destiny of his descendants were wrapped up, so to say, in his own conduct; and it was only in this corporate

and representative sense, that the Assembly affirmed that we "sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression." Their affirmation was, not that we were personally present, but corporately, or seminally, and representatively present in "his first transgression." And was not this true? And what improvement upon this very phraseology, taken in the sense in which the Assembly used it, have its opponents, with all the subtlety and skill of the acutest dialectics, been able to construct?

We do not mean by these statements, that the Westminster Confession ought to be accepted as a finality in such a sense, as to exclude attempts to set its great truths in new lights and relations, always, of course, retaining and presenting those truths themselves in their integrity and power. The soundest religious philosophy of the present day has not been able to make any perceptible progress even in that direction. Though such progress is theoretically possible, and perhaps probable, no practical results of it have yet appeared, either in the construction of symbols of faith, or in oral proclamations of the truth.

Never was a synod of divines in a better position for forming a sound Confession of Faith than that of Westminster. It was composed of

men of the most unquestionable talents and the most profound erudition. They were preëminently skilled in the original languages of the Bible. They enjoyed, besides, the assistance of the most eminent scholars in the kingdom, both lay and clerical, who were not of their own body. They were not themselves divided into "schools," each having its separate party interests to serve. And more than all, they were men of prayer — eminent for "walking with God," even in a generation which, perhaps, has had no equal for consecration to Christ. Their Confession of Faith and their Catechism were therefore formed under a conjuncture of conditions far more favorable than any which had preceded it or may come after it; and have commanded to this day a wider measure of approbation from the friends of Christianity than any others ever framed.

Since the promulgation of the Saybrook Platform in 1708, propositions have at various times been made for conventions to be called to form a better confession than the Westminster or its reaffirmations; but they have met with no encouragement from the churches. The providence of God has always interposed against such attempts, and we see no indications that they are likely to be more successful in the future.

He has frustrated every attempt to produce a better English version of the Bible than the one now generally in use. So far as we can divine his will from his providences, it would seem that King James's translation is to be the Bible for the countless millions which will speak the English language in future ages, and that the Westminster Confession of Faith will continue in the hands of those millions as the best epitome of the doctrinal contents of that Holy Book. We see, therefore, from that quarter, no evidence that the present generation are making any essential advances in theological accuracy.

3. The astonishing progress which has been made, within the last fifty years, *in many of the natural sciences and the arts*, has doubtless led some to believe that a corresponding progress must have been made in theology. The brilliant discoveries in geology, astronomy, chemistry, etc., which throw such a halo of glory over the present age; the application of steam to the purpose of locomotion, so that we can now travel by sea at the rate of twenty miles, and by land at the rate of sixty miles per hour; and the transmission of intelligence, by an electrical battery, from England to America, and back again to England, and all in less time than it requires to state the fact, have apparently con-

vinced the "Young America" of our clergy, that a parallel "progress" has been made and will yet be made in theological science and doctrinal correctness. But considering the wide difference there is in the nature of the two subjects which are thus brought into comparison, and of our means of information upon them, there is an unfortunate chasm between the premises and the conclusion.

4. Another cause of our supposed advance in theology may, perhaps, be found in *a secret dislike of the doctrines of the Bible themselves, and a desire to get rid of them altogether*. "Lo this only have I found," said the Preacher, "that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." We love and revere the Christian ministry, and would religiously shield it from all undeserved reproach. But "faithful are the wounds of a friend," and that faithfulness requires us to admit, under the instructions which history forces upon our remembrance, that some of the subtlest developments of dissatisfaction with the truth have been found under the robes of the sacerdotal office, and that that incipient hesitation to "declare all the counsel of God," which next precedes the avowal of positive error, is the fault of consecrated lips. We would by no possibility be un-

charitable, on the one hand, nor, on the other, ought we to ignore those monitory lessons of the past in New England, which teach us that there may be among us theologians, claiming to be evangelical, who are busy with their "inventions" to make the doctrines of grace more palatable to themselves and to others. And what watchword is more flattering to the pride of the heart, or less likely to awaken the suspicions of good men, than the cry of "progress in theology," and especially so in a day when "progress" is confessedly made in almost every other important interest of society? When we consider the hostility of the natural heart to the humbling doctrines of Christianity—a hostility which can never be made placable by any scholastic attainment or refinement of manners—is it at all surprising that some men, of whom we ought to expect better things, may be unwittingly attempting to conceal or remove that hostility by the vain imagination that they are wiser on some theological points than Calvin, or Edwards, or Howe. If the edge of those doctrines can be turned or their sharpness blunted, by some novel, philosophical statement of them, will not much be gained both to their peace of conscience and their dialectic skill? That such motives as these may unconsciously

convince some persons that they are far in advance of men superior to themselves in theological attainments, it is only accepting the instructions of history to conjecture.

Having indicated some of the probable causes of the opinion we are considering, let us inquire,

First, in what respects it is true, that we are making real progress in theological science. It is true of the science of *exegesis*. It was a sound maxim of Melancthon, "*Scriptura non potest intelligi theologice, nisi antea sit intellecta grammaticè*"—the Scripture cannot be understood theologically until it has been understood grammatically. In this department, the German scholars have gone far in advance of the English and even of the American, and for their profound and exhaustive researches we owe them a debt of gratitude which it will be difficult to pay. The lexical and grammatical peculiarities of the Bible—the one relating to the origin, form, and usage of words, and the other to their flexion and government—have been mastered; the true canons of interpretation have been settled, and a determined adherence to them, let them conduct us to whatsoever results they may, is now conceded to be the religious duty of every expounder of the Scriptures.

The nice shades of difference in the meaning of biblical synonyms, and the true interpretation of difficult texts and of Hebrew and Greek idioms, were never so thoroughly understood. The science of hermeneutics may be said to have arrived very nearly to a state of perfectness, and the consequence is, that honest and intelligent interpreters are daily approximating towards unity of faith.

The unsound principles of interpretation which for many centuries prevailed, and which substituted sound for sense, appearance for argument, fanciful meanings for etymological, led to results the most deplorable; and we regret to say, that that style of interpretation has not yet entirely disappeared from the more illiterate class of the evangelical ministry. Grave divines practically adopted the absurdity of Horne Tooke, in his *Diversions of Purley*, when he says: "Truth is nothing but what every man troweth; and two persons may contradict each other, and yet both speak truth, for the truth of one person may be opposite to the truth of another." This solemn trifling, which would make the Bible favor any views however contradictory, is severely and justly rebuked by Luther. "We must not make God's Word mean what we wish; we must not bend *it*, but allow it to bend *us*." This

mode of interpreting the Scriptures, which so seriously marred the investigations of the patristic and mediæval scholars, is now all but universally discarded, and little remains to be accomplished in that direction, except to make all interpreters faithfully embrace and advocate that system of truth, to which we are inevitably conducted by a rigid adherence to the well-settled principles of philology.

It is a fact of the deepest interest to the cause of truth, that all this increase of light, within the last half century, upon the science of biblical interpretation, has not unfavorably affected a single doctrine of the orthodox faith, but, on the contrary, it has contributed to establish that system on a basis which will forever remain impregnable. Fairbairn, in his *Hermeneutical Manual*, says: "By the establishment of a more accurate criticism, by sounder principles of interpretation, and by an intimate acquaintance with the original languages, it has been found that Scripture will not surrender up any of its peculiar doctrines."¹ Winer affirms the same truth: "The controversies among interpreters have usually led back to the admission, that the old Protestant views of the meaning of the sacred texts, are the correct ones."² Prog-

¹ P. 88.

² *Literatur-Zeitung*. No. 44.

ress, then, in hermeneutical science, has only confirmed the theological system of the great divines of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Very decided advance has also been made in *the history of religious opinions*. This branch of theological science has of late been prosecuted in the most thorough manner, and its true place and real value in the interpretation of the Scriptures, are now very generally appreciated. In the Romish church, it has for ages been abused by making tradition of superior authority to the Bible. The famous maxim of Vincentius Lirinensis, *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*, was a preposterous engine of oppression, employed to compel conformity to the doctrines and usages of that church. That celebrated adage of Roman Catholic theologians, which once spread alarm among the nations, is, even now, feebly but impotently echoed by their High Church followers; but another generation will scarcely pass away, before its dying tones will be lost upon the ear of man. Discrimination is now familiarly made between that ecclesiastical authority which steps in between God and the conscience, and claims to determine the faith of men by the decrees of councils and the edicts of popes, under the

pains and penalties of perdition; and that enlightened and sober regard to the belief of good men in all the ages, which uses it to accredit and confirm our own.

“Analogy of Faith,” or the “*Regula Fidei*” of the Latin doctors, as defined by Ernesti and others, leads to the inquiry, What has been the creed of the most serious and intelligent men since Christ ascended to heaven? If the Church of Rome has fallen into the one extreme of regarding the faith of that church as the only and infallible test of truth, the Puritans, in their hatred of prelatic authority, fell into the other, by throwing the argument away altogether. A very important advance has therefore been made in theological science, by acquiring a more thorough knowledge of the history of religious opinions, and by a juster application of that knowledge in determining our own faith. The wise theologian, while he will never surrender the right of private judgment, will listen reverently to the voices of all time, to the accordant faith of the great and the good of all the ages; and when he sees the Church passing through her cycles of controversy, and persecution, and progressive enlightenment, with a gradual and steady approach towards unity of faith, and her doctrinal views coalescing and culminating in

the Reformed Confessions, and best set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith — he feels that there is but little risk in adopting a system, which has been eliminated from the Scriptures by such a process, — by sixteen centuries of laborious study, unsparing self-correction and earnest prayer. A system, so eduved from the Bible, and so enucleated of error, must be the true one, or all human methods of arriving at Scriptural doctrine are at fault. The clenching of this argument is the fact, that the present profound knowledge of the history of religious opinions — a department of study comparatively unknown to the Westminster divines, does not impair the conclusions to which they arrived on exegetical grounds, but strongly corroborates them. If there is, then, any system of religious faith, which is certified to be the true one by the general current of opinion for eighteen centuries, that system is the Evangelical, in the Westminster sense. In this matter, “the voice of the people is the voice of God.” The true history of Christianity, is the history of true Christianity.

Great progress has also been made *in exploring the localities mentioned in the Bible, and in the knowledge of Oriental manners and customs.* The labors of Niebuhr, Jahn, Robinson,

Smith, Barclay, Thompson, and others, in this department, leave little to be desired; and the results of their very accurate researches have added "confirmation strong" to the current belief, that the Biblical record is worthy of entire credence.

Theological philosophy, too, has been improved. The influence which philosophy exerts upon theological speculation is proverbial. The dogmatic views of the early fathers were essentially affected by the philosophy of Plato; those of the mediæval schoolmen, by the dialectics of Aristotle; and those of our own times, by the systems of Des Cartes, Bacon, Locke, Leibnitz, Berkeley, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Sir William Hamilton. It is hardly possible for the scientific theologian wholly to emancipate himself from the philosophy and public opinion of the age in which he lives; and if he can, he must necessarily have some philosophy of his own, which is always less valuable, as it is more subjective, more partial, more out of the line of history, and less adapted to the wants of the age. "The history of philosophy and of Christian doctrine," says Dr. Schaff, "move forward side by side, alternately repelling and attracting each other, till at last the natural reason of man will come into perfect harmony with divine rev-

elation, and the wisdom of the world become identical with the wisdom of God."

The progress which has of late been made in the philosophy of theology has, we think, demonstrated the shallowness of all those theories of sin which make it consist wholly in exercises, to the rejection of a sinful nature; and which hold that, under a government of law, it can be pardoned and disposed of without a real atonement. Superficial views of the more than Miltonic depth of sin in the human heart logically lead to superficial views of regeneration, and resolve it into culture, or into the self-determination of the will, or into a mere change of the purpose, which the sinner can at any moment enact, as easily as he can turn over his hand, or walk into another room. The philosophy which underlies the theory of Dr. Emmons on the nature of sin, though not so intended by him, is really the *fons et origo* of those so-called "improvements in theology," which for the last thirty years have divided the churches and the ministry, and which are still a "lamentation" among us. That great and good man repudiated the "New Haven theology," though, in so doing, he repudiated what was the natural and logical result of his own theories when separated from his view of the divine efficiency. He seems almost to have regarded it as the great

mission of his life to establish the thesis, that we did *not* "sin in" or "fall with" Adam, and that all sin consists in *exercises*. But

"What a pity, in rearing so beauteous a system,
One trifling particular, *truth*, should have missed him."

His theory, however, as advocated by Dr. Taylor and others, took sin out of those abysmal depths of the heart where it ever lives and rages, made it phenomenal, and taught us that it lies scarcely beneath the very epidermis of the character. To construct a regeneration which would match such superficial views of sin, was then an easy task.

It may not be irrelevant to the present discussion to remark, in passing, that other theories of Dr. Emmons, as, that infants dying, are annihilated,¹ that we must be willing to be damned in order to be saved,² and that the first emotions of young converts invariably rise in the order of love, repentance, faith³ — are simply the speculations of his philosophy. According to his own showing, these dogmas are not the direct teachings of the Bible, but only, as he calls them, his "inferences." Twenty years have not elapsed since he went to the rewards of his laborious life, but, in the interim, such has been the progress in philosophical speculation, that

¹ See Works, vol. iv. p. 510. ² Memoir, vol. i. p. 83.

³ Works, vol. v. p. 161.

probably ten divines cannot now be found among us who believe either of these theories.

Happily for the cause of truth, such absurd speculations are passing away, and sounder views of the nature of sin, of the atonement, and of regeneration, under the influence of a sounder philosophy, have already begun to obtain among divines, who thought differently thirty years ago. A theology which is sufficient to save an apostate world must rest on the truest philosophical basis; and the late discussions of these subjects have, we think, pretty thoroughly convinced the most candid men among us, that we must go back for the most correct views of theology to the fundamental truths of that system which culminated in the rise of Puritanism, the settlement of this country, modern revivals of religion, and missionary operations in pagan lands.

Having glanced at the points in which real progress has of late been made in theological science, let us now look at that in which no advance has been or can be made, and which is, indeed, the vital point in the subject before us. We refer to *the great doctrines of Christianity themselves*.

In the nature of the case, the substantive and central truths of the Bible must always remain

the same. They can no more change, or be improved, than their Author and Revealer.

Doctrinal truth, as it came from the mind of the Holy Ghost, is a fixed quantity. Its integrity is impaired, either by addition or subtraction. The doctrines of the Bible are therefore, in themselves, complete, finished, perfect. But while this is perhaps generally admitted, it is said, that our apprehension and statement of them may be indefinitely improved. Here, then, lies the gist of our inquiry, and here is the point where the most important "progress" is claimed to be made. It has recently been declared, that "in our apprehension of divine truth, great progress may be made, and is to be devoutly hoped for. If progress has been made in centuries past, why may it not be so in the centuries yet future? Who will say where this progress is to cease?"

Now, it might be a sufficient reply to say, that any statement of theological doctrines which abandons or modifies the usual orthodox nomenclature, would be a virtual abandonment or modification of the doctrines themselves. Probably in no science, excepting mathematics, is it as true that "words are things," as in that of theology. The current terms which set forth the dogmatic truths of revelation, have been

used for ages. Their etymological and historical sense is so true to the thoughts to be expressed, they have so long been employed by the most acute and comprehensive minds to mean precisely what they now do in common discourse, and they are so clearly and firmly fixed in the public thought, that an attempt to substitute others in their room, would at once, and justly, excite the suspicion of unsoundness in the faith. Hence it is, that some popular preachers of the "progressive" school, who are now experimenting in this direction, have already lost much of the confidence of the Christian public. Indeed, it is hardly conceivable, that society can possibly reach such a height of refinement, or the ministry become so learned and astute, that those terms can ever be safely dispensed with, or even essentially modified.

But the opinion we are considering can be successfully met from another point of departure. It may, indeed, be presumptuous to affirm, that it is within the competence of uninspired men to construct a creed which shall be absolutely perfect, nor is such an affirmation necessary to the validity of our argument. *Absolute* perfectness is not to be expected. It is only that approach to it, which is possible to the most enlightened and sanctified humanity. The

assertion then, that, in the present highly advanced state of biblical science, and with our present most complete apparatus for biblical criticism, and in the possession of a formulary of faith which has stood the test of two hundred years, "*great progress* in theology may yet be made, and continue to be made in the centuries yet future," would seem to be against all probability, as well as at war with the position, that theological truth is an invariable quantity. It proceeds, too, on the assumption, that our attainments in theology are as tentative and experimental as in chemistry or astronomy; that God has not revealed to us his will in his word more clearly than he has the number of the stars in the heavens to the unassisted eye of man, or a knowledge of the properties of elementary substances and their mutual combinations to him who has never stepped into the laboratory of a chemist. The assumption is preposterous.

But it would not be preposterous, if God had given us written revelations upon the sciences of chemistry and astronomy. If he had so done, then our means of information upon those sciences would be of the same character, as are our present means of information upon the science of theology. In that event, our knowledge of those sciences would be no more exper-

imental and "progressive," than our knowledge of theology now is. In our present relations to these two subjects, we cannot therefore reason from the one to the other, either with logic or with safety.

The Bible is a special revelation to us upon the subject of theology. It was given to be understood, and it can be understood by a proper application to it of the usual canons for interpreting language. Those canons can be applied to it now, as properly and as successfully as they can be a thousand years hence. The truths and facts of the Bible lie now, as much as they will then, within the range of the human understanding enlightened by education and grace; whereas countless orbs, unannounced by special apocalypse, roll in the heavens and will always give employment to the telescope; and numberless laws in this sublunary world, unexplained from above, will forever reward the investigations of the philosopher. The very *revelation* we have upon the high themes of theology necessarily sets metes and bounds to human inquiry, and prescribes "limits to religious thought," — a *status* which widely differs from that of any of the natural sciences.

This theory of indefinite progression in theology is not unlike that of the author of the

Vestiges of Creation, as to natural history ; which is, that the first organized being was an animated animalcule, which gradually became an animal of the lowest form, and then slowly expanded into a mollusc, which, afterwards, in the lapse of ages, grew into a fish, and this, after many attempts, got on to dry land, converted its fins into legs and became a reptile, and the reptile shot out wings and became a bird, and the bird dropped its wings downward, made legs of them and became a beast, and the beast at length rose up erect and became a man. If this theory be correct, alas ! for the past generations of men, and alas ! perhaps, for us, for even we, for aught we can tell, may yet be in the palæozoic stage of theological development, and may have too little knowledge of the Bible to save us !

But, all badinage apart, we ask, then, if, with all the light which has been thrown upon the science of biblical interpretation for the last fifty years, theologians have not advanced at all in creed-making, and are now obliged to go back more than two centuries for the soundest symbol of the Christian faith which has yet been framed, what becomes of these boastful professions of "great progress in theology" ? Who has made such "progress," and where are the symbols of their faith ? On a subject so

grave as this, they ought, certainly, to have *something to show* in proof of such pretensions. What creed have they formed which is more in harmony with "the analogy of faith," and which is so generally accepted by the churches as to command a greater measure of respect, than that which for two hundred years has been appealed to as the standard of orthodoxy? In the absence of any such proof, we must be permitted to regard such pretensions as utterly groundless, and to inquire whether they are not indications of an intended departure, and, perhaps, of a real actual departure from the generally accepted faith of the churches. Error has always entered the church with honeyed phrase and velvet step, but has been intolerant of every attempt to expose her approaches.

But it is alleged, that if no advance has been made for a long period in the construction of creeds, decided progress is visible in the preaching of the truth in the pulpit. It is held that the clergy of the present day have a more perfect apprehension of the great doctrines of the Bible, and preach them with greater effect than their predecessors. But what are the facts in the case? That the literary and æsthetic qualities of the pulpit are superior to those of any former period, is admitted; but is it not the public

conviction, that what has been gained on the score of elegance and taste, is more than balanced by the loss of depth and of truth? Is it not the general belief, that the distinctive doctrines of Christianity do not lie in the minds of the clergy so clearly and sharply defined, and that their discussion of them in the pulpit is by no means so frequent, clear, and uncompromising as in past times? Is it not a matter of remark and solicitude in the churches, that the ministry of the present day do not preach so doctrinally, or so closely, as did the fathers? Is it not true, that the great doctrines of the sovereignty of God, of the native depravity of man, of atonement for sin by the sacrifice of Christ, of personal election, of unconditional submission, of regeneration by the special influences of the Holy Spirit, of justification by faith alone, and of the literal eternity of future punishments, are not formally discussed in many of our pulpits once in a year, or even once in a lifetime? Is it not the fact, that revivals of religion are less pure, that conviction of sin is less profound, and the exercises of professed converts are less satisfactory? And is it not true, to a considerable extent, that in the great Revival, two years since, the ministry was less honored as the instrumental power, and lay agency

used as never before in the work of converting men?

In the light of facts such as these, so unusual, so significant, and so lamentable, what are we to think of the claim, that the utterances of the pulpit are sounder, more searching and effective, than in the days of the fathers? The fault of that part of the evangelical pulpit to which we refer is not that it rejects the cardinal doctrines of the Bible, but that it does not present them in that formal, frequent, and earnest manner, which the exigencies of Zion demand. Their uncomfortable angularities are practically rounded off, and their penetrating edge is practically blunted. Their moral force is evaporated by the very learned, and philosophical, and tasteful style in which they are discussed. They are not wholly ignored, neither are they thoroughly preached. So far as they are presented at all, it is rather by implication than by open confession, by an assumption of their truth, than by a direct demonstration of it. The churches vitally need more of that unpretending but alarming exhibition of the fearful truths of the Bible, which, under the preaching of Edwards, started the congregation at Enfield to their feet, and made them cling to the balusters of the pews to save them from sinking into hell: more of that preaching of

“Christ and his Cross,” which rendered the ministry of the eloquent Griffin “one scene of divine wonders:” more of that ardent zeal for the immediate conversion of sinners which glowed in the heart of Payson, and which daily said, “Give me Portland, or I die:” more of the apostolic gravity and pastoral fidelity of Hyde, who was “a good minister of Jesus Christ” everywhere, in his family, in the street, in his journeys, as well as in the pulpit: and more of the discriminating, searching ability of Nettleton, to lay open the sinner’s heart to his own astonished view, and pursue him with persistent earnestness through all his windings and excuses, till he submits at the foot of the Cross.

But while a part of the clergy of our country, and especially of New England, give evidence that they have made no “progress in theology” in the right direction, there is another part by whom the doctrines of grace are enforced with all fidelity. Indications, too, are not wanting of return to sounder views, on the part of some divines, who, thirty years ago, were nearly “lost” in the “wandering mazes” of a false philosophy and a speculating theology. The New Haven divines of 1860, with two or three exceptions, are not the New Haven divines of 1830. The leaven of those speculations is yet indeed

widely spread in the ministry and the churches, and, in modified forms, it pervades some of the chairs of our theological institutions; but the sound conservatism of the New England heart, and the New England head, and the old New England piety, will, we trust, ere long, by the grace of God, bring back the theology of New England to the platform of Edwards and the Catechism. Jehovah reigns. The true faith will yet triumph. "The good time coming" will certainly arrive.

"The groans of nature in this nether world,
Which Heaven has heard for ages, have an end,
Foretold by prophets and by poets sung,
The time of rest, the promised Sabbath comes.
Six thousand years of 'error' have well nigh
Fulfilled their tardy and disastrous course
Over this sinful world; and what remains
Of this tempestuous state of human things
Is merely as the working of a sea,
Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest."





COMMUNION WITH GOD.

When *Morn*, with rosy hues,
 Illumes the purple East,
My soul, be thou with God,
 Whose presence is a feast.

When *Noon*, bright noon, arrives,
 Commune with God on high ;
His glorious face outshines
 The splendors of the sky.

When *Night*, dark night, draws on,
 Trust in His gracious name,
For darkness and the light
 To Him are all the same.

When *Midnight* veils the earth,
 And all creation sleeps,
On bended knee adore
 The Hand that Israel keeps.

When *Wars* convulse the land,
 To His pavilion flee ;
In His most holy hand
 He holds our destiny.

When *Death* his summons sends,
 Transported with the news,
Exchange thy sorrows here,
 For everlasting praise.



THE TESTS OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

“**A**LL scripture” was “given by inspiration of God.” The Bible, therefore, is a revelation of facts or truths, which could not have been known by us without such a revelation. But it is in no proper sense a *revelation*, unless it can be understood, and understood by all men substantially alike. It can be in no useful sense a revelation, if it teaches contradictory doctrines, or if it teaches more than one system of doctrine. It must therefore teach one system, and not twenty, nor ten, nor two.

Besides, it would tantalize our moral necessities and trifle with our moral wants, if it teaches a system of truth which we can never be certain that we have ascertained. It must be true, then, either that God has given us a book which claims to be a revelation of His holy will, and yet given it in such an obscure and ambiguous form that we cannot possibly understand it, and after the most honest and thorough investigation

we may arrive at opposite results; or, He has given it in such a clear and intelligible manner, that all honest and intelligent inquirers can certainly find out its real meaning, and truly ascertain the system of doctrine which He intended to communicate to men. To suppose that God has given us a revelation, so obscure and doubtful, that we can arrive at meanings which are contradictory and yet all of them true, as some seem to suppose, is simply absurd. Yes, even grave divines have practically adopted the sophism of Horne Tooke, who says in his "*Diversions of Purley*:" "Truth is nothing but every man troweth; and two persons may contradict each other, *and yet both speak truth*, for the truth of one person may be *opposite* to the truth of another." Such solemn trifling will make the Bible favor any man's views, however erroneous, and it cannot be respected by any sound interpreter. Another class allege that God has not given us an intelligible revelation, but this is to call in question His ability to do so. Unless they are willing to assume the responsibility of this implication of the character of God, they must admit that He has given us a revelation which can be understood, that the revelation teaches but one system of doctrine, and that the system, whatever it be, is the true one.

How comes it to pass, then, that there are, at least, some fifty or sixty denominations all professing to get their systems of faith from this same Book, and all claiming to be equally intelligent and honest in their investigations, and equally desirous of arriving at the truth? How comes it to pass, if the Bible was given to be understood, and if it can be understood by all men substantially alike, that there are such numerous and conflicting opinions in the Christian world? Men do not understand other books so variously. All the inhabitants of a town, city, or state understand Macaulay's *History of England*, or Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, alike. If there is any discrepancy in the interpretation of the meaning of those authors, or of any other uninspired authors, it is so slight as to attract no attention, and is worthy of no regard. Is it then true, that men who are inspired of God cannot express themselves as clearly as uninspired men? This cannot be pretended.

With the Bible, then, before us, written with the express purpose of being a revelation, and of being understood, if all men were equally intelligent and honest, it would seem that the present diversity of opinion would nearly cease, and the whole Christian world would be reduced

substantially to one denomination. "The watchmen" would "see eye to eye," and the prayer of the Saviour, that all his children may be "one," would be answered.

It must be evident that this is a subject of the deepest interest to the prosperity of Zion, and that it needs a more thorough consideration than it has yet received. The present division of Christians is unnatural, abnormal, wrong. It is the reproach of Christianity, not her commendation. It "was not so in the beginning," it will not be so in the end, and it ought not to be so now. The common opinion that many denominations are necessary to the highest efficiency of Christianity needs to be reëxamined, for it contains elements of error which are unnecessarily keeping good men apart; and to this work we are specially summoned at the present time, when Christians of various names are sighing over their differences, gradually approximating each other in their faith, and making direct efforts, in Bible and Tract Societies and in multitudinous Prayer Meetings, to promote union among themselves. This, then, would seem to be the most auspicious season which has occurred for many centuries, to see if they cannot be brought to a more common *doctrinal* basis, not be surrendering any important truth,

but by united efforts to find out what the truth *really is*. Perhaps it is too much to say, considering the infirmities of the human mind, that all men, however intelligent and honest, can be expected to think exactly alike. There are such differences of idiosyncrasy, of temperament, of associations, habits, manners, customs, that with any degree of light we may obtain in the present world, it perhaps is not to be expected, that on every minor point of doctrine, they will ever entirely agree. But it is not too much to expect and demand, that, on every fundamental point,—on every point that is necessary to the salvation of the soul and to a symmetrical development of Christian character, all honest and intelligent men can be brought to a real harmony of belief.

If this be so, there must be some methods of *finding out* what the Bible really teaches, and what the truth really is. If we mistake not, there are four such methods:

I. The first is to apply to the Bible *the same rules of interpretation* which we use in determining the meaning of all other books.

There are certain rules or canons of exegesis which have their basis in the common sense of mankind, and which all men agree to use in the interpretation of all written or printed books and documents. Some of these rules are the

following:—to consider all the circumstances in which the writer was placed; his age, education, habits, taste, employment, &c.,—to explain any doubtful passages by those which are clear;—to interpret ambiguous expressions by the general scope or object of the argument the writer then had in hand;—to make him as far as possible his own interpreter;—to reject no doctrine which he advances merely because it is new to us, or incomprehensible by us, provided it is supported by competent proof;—to interpret his language by intendment, that is, by what we know from his other writings, if he has written anything else, he must have intended to say;—and, finally, never to allow our early education, or wishes, or interests, or prejudices, or theories, or sect, or party to have the least weight whatever in determining what he means. These, and similar principles of interpretation, every man knows are sound. They are axiomatic truths, accepted alike by all men of common sense and common judgment. They are the property of no party, but the common property of all parties. They favor no party but the right party. They are used in all our courts of justice in determining the meaning of contested documents; and they are daily used, both consciously and unconsciously, by all men in settling cases

of doubt. These rules, which we all so faithfully apply to determine the meaning of the ambiguous phrases of uninspired writings, we are also to apply, with the same fidelity to the Bible; and we are to embrace the results to which they conduct us, however much they may conflict with our wishes, or vary from our preconceived opinions. A faithful application of these canons of criticism is, therefore, one most important means of ascertaining the true meaning of the Scriptures.

To bring these rules within the understanding of every mind, and to show their value, we will apply them to two or three cases of disputed texts.

Gal. v. 4. "Ye are fallen from grace." Now, what does the Apostle mean? From this expression, one denomination have gathered their doctrine of "falling from grace," or that real Christians can relapse into a state of impenitence and finally be lost. Is this the true interpretation? Let us apply one of the rules just stated, and see how the case stands. One canon of interpretation is, to consider *the object and scope of the writer* in the passage under consideration.

By carefully reading the verses before and after that where this phrase occurs, we find that the Apostle was urging the Galatians to "stand

fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free," not to observe the Jewish rite of circumcision for justification, but to depend alone on the righteousness of Christ. He tells them that if they do not, they have "fallen from grace," that is, they have abandoned, given up the mode of salvation by grace, and have gone back to the old Jewish plan of salvation by works. You see, therefore, by the *object* of the writer, that he was discussing a subject *entirely different* from the question whether a Christian can become an impenitent sinner again. That point was not then in his mind. He was not discussing it directly or indirectly, nor, indeed, was he making the remotest allusion to it whatever. By the rule, then, which should always bind us in interpreting language, we cannot honestly get anything out of this phrase which bears, in the slightest degree, upon the much agitated question of "falling from grace." The whole theory, then, of that class of Christians, so far certainly as this passage is concerned, is at once destroyed. Their interpretation is purely one of sound, not of sense. Luther says, "We must not make God's word mean what we wish; we must not bend *it*, but allow it to bend *us*."

Take another case. Rom. vi. 3: "Therefore

we are buried with Him by baptism into death." Col. ii. 12: "Buried with Him in baptism." From these expressions another denomination think that they make out a strong argument in favor of immersion. But any man of ordinary intelligence who will faithfully apply the proper rule of interpretation to these passages, and just inquire what the Apostle was *writing about*, or what was the *object of his argument*, will find that he was not discussing the *mode* of baptism at all, nor indeed was he making the slightest reference to it whatsoever. He was simply urging the truth that Christians ought to be as *dead to this world* in their supreme affections, as a man is who is literally dead and buried up in the ground. This was all he said, and all he meant. To put any other sense upon his words, and especially one which is clearly outside of the *object and intent* of his argument, is clearly absurd as well as morally wrong. It is making him say something which he did not mean to say, and it is therefore plainly forbidden by all sound rules of interpretation. The entire argument of our Baptist friends in favor of immersion, so far as these texts are concerned, is therefore at once overturned.

Take one case more. Christ says, "I and my Father are one;" and He also says, "My Father

is greater than I." Both these statements are equally canonical and true, and neither of them is to be rejected nor explained away. We must then, instead of repudiating either averment, because it is apparently in conflict with the other, or really in conflict with our preconceived opinions, look around us for some hypothesis respecting the person of Christ, on which both these statements can be made to harmonize. On examination we find that the Trinitarian hypothesis of two natures in the person of Christ, the one divine the other human, is the only one on which the apparent contradiction can be reconciled. This hypothesis *does* reconcile it, and it must therefore be the true one. Upon any other, you cannot make the Bible consistent with itself. Upon any other, you are under the necessity of rejecting a part of what it says respecting the person of Christ, and are obliged to take ground which is clearly infidel. The common or Orthodox doctrine, then, that Christ possesses two natures, that He is both very and God very man, must be the real teaching of the Bible on that subject.

Thus, it appears, that it is only by a persistent application of the rule, that we are to let the Bible speak for itself, and that we are never to reject any part of it or force our own theories

upon it, that we can arrive at its true meaning.

A very large part of the differences among believers in the Bible has arisen from the neglect of these obvious principles of interpretation, and the adoption of others which necessarily lead astray. Thomas Aquinas proved to his own satisfaction, and, as he thought, to the satisfaction of others, that inferiors in the church are bound to submit to superiors, by these words, "The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them." But the Angelic Doctor was not the only man, who, in his interpretation of the Bible, has set at nought all common sense. Not a few of his disciples yet survive. A blind faith in tradition or parental instruction, repairing to the Bible to prove our present belief, substituting sound for sense, words for things, and fanciful meanings for real ones, have long been, and still are, most fruitful sources of error. Werenfels, a Dutch commentator, whose works were published at Amsterdam one hundred and fifty years ago, says, with profound truth, "He that goes to the Bible to find his own faith, will be sure to find it there;" and yet this is probably the practice of a large majority of those who regard themselves as honest interpreters of the Word of God. Nothing will so effectually

• OBERLIN
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

dispel error from the churches, and bring honest men of all denominations into substantial agreement, as a persistent application to the Bible of these canons of interpretation which, when once stated, are seen by all men to be intrinsically just and proper. It is a matter of the highest felicitation that the principles which underlie all real union of theological belief, are such as belong to no one denomination, but principles in which all of them have a common property and a common faith; — principles which all men acknowledge to be sound, and which commend themselves to the judgment of pure and universal reason. They, therefore, bind all interpreters.

II. Another method of ascertaining what the Bible teaches is, by applying to it what is called *the analogy of faith*. “If any man prophesy,” says the Apostle Paul, “let him prophesy according to the proportion,” or the analogy “of faith.” By the phrase “analogy of faith,” we mean *the general belief of the Christian church in all the ages*. If the Church of Christ has, in all ages and nations, believed any one set of doctrines, be it what it may, it is strong presumptive evidence that those doctrines are the true ones. This argument proceeds on the ground that real Christians cannot be fundamentally wrong in their religious belief. *Fundamental* error is pre-

cluded by the very supposition, for men who hold such error cannot be Christians at all. This argument also proceeds on the ground that God will so order the lot of his children in life, their means of education, their habits of thought, and their spiritual taste, that, in searching the Scriptures, they will arrive at results which are generally correct. What, then, *has been the faith of the great mass of the Christian world?* By examining ecclesiastical history, and the creeds and confessions which have been adopted in all the Christian centuries, we find that they teach, with greater or less explicitness, the doctrines of the Unity, Spirituality, and Trinity of the Godhead; the Supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; the Personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost; the fall of man; his need of regeneration; the vicarious atonement of Christ; justification by faith and not by works; the general Judgment; the eternal duration of the rewards and punishments of the future world; the Christian Sabbath; and the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. A cordial belief in these great truths has always been demanded by intelligent Christians, with but few exceptions, as a prerequisite to Christian communion. That there have been among them minor differences of belief is very true, and

that some have held views which to us appear quite inconsistent with an intelligent acceptance of these doctrines, is equally true; but, with every abatement, these truths have constituted the substance of their faith. This was substantially the faith of Paul and John and Peter; of Polycarp and Irenæus and Ignatius; of Cyprian and Basil and Justin Martyr; of Constantine and Chrysostom and Augustine; of Fulgentius and Justine and Gregory the First; of Bede and Anselm and Bernard; of Wickliffe and Luther and Calvin; of Cranmer and Baxter and Howe; of Owen and Milton and Locke; of Watts and Doddridge and Scott; of Edwards and Chalmers and Dwight; of the Waldenses, the Armenians, and the Nestorians; of the Church of Geneva, the Church of England, and the Church of Scotland. This was also the faith of the Puritan Fathers of New England; of the Scotch Covenanters and Reformed Dutch which settled New York, and of the persecuted Huguenots who fled from France to South Carolina. This is also the faith of an immense majority of all the professed Christians in these United States, and of the numerous missionary churches which they have formed in other lands. This must then be taken as the *Consensus* of the Church of God on earth. It has always held

substantially that system of religious doctrine which is familiarly known among us as the Orthodox or Evangelical system. If you would then ascertain the real meaning of the Scriptures, stop and listen reverently to the great voices which are sounding along the galleries of time,—to the *accordant chorus* of the great and the good of all the ages. Their decision is the right decision. In this matter the voice of the people is emphatically the voice of God. So far then as the *analogy of faith* throws light on this subject, and it throws much, it shows us what *the truth really is*.¹

It is not at all inconsistent with this argument, that the later Confessions of Faith are more full and explicit on some points than were those of the patristic and mediæval ages. They became more full, just as rapidly as different heretics denied the essential doctrines of grace, and brought them under direct and more critical examination. It was the denial by Arius of the true doctrine of the Trinity, which led to the

¹ In precise harmony with these views, Professor Shedd, the author of *The History of Christian Doctrine*, says:—“As the theologian passes the several ages of the Church in review, and becomes acquainted with the *results* to which the general mind of the Church has come in interpreting the Scriptures, he runs little hazard of error in regard to *their real meaning and contents*.”—*Discourses and Essays*, p. 151.

calling of the Council of Nice in 325, and to the formal insertion of that doctrine into their creed. The Augsburg Confession, drawn up by Luther and Melancthon, in 1530, to meet the errors of their day, more accurately stated than had been done before, the real Divinity of Christ, his substitution and vicarious sacrifice, and the necessity, freeness, and efficacy of Divine Grace. The Synod of Dort, in 1619, defined with greater clearness than any preceding Confession, the important difference between the doctrines of Calvinism and Arminianism; and the Westminster Confession, in 1643, surpassed all its predecessors for symmetry, comprehensiveness, and completeness. The Westminster Confession has met with such general favor among Evangelical Christians, that few attempts have since been made to construct a better one; — for the Cambridge Platform in 1648, the Savoy Confession in 1658, the Boston Confession in 1680, and the Saybrook Platform in 1708, are little else than mere *reaffirmances* of the doctrines of the Westminster. Thus, it appears, that for more than seventeen hundred years, the wisest, holiest men in all the Church have put forth their most strenuous exertions, by a continuous and self-correcting process, to penetrate and reach and enucleate the inmost heart and meaning of the

Scriptures ; and if they have failed, success would seem to be impossible to human endeavor. But they have not failed. This brief historic review of the progress which has been made in collecting the more important truths of the Bible into forms and symbols, till those efforts have been exhausted by such close approximation to perfect results, shows quite conclusively that they have *succeeded*, and shows, too, *what those truths really are*.

III. Another method of ascertaining the real meaning of the Bible is the *experimental*, or a *practical compliance with the will of God* as far as we now know it. "If any will *do* His will, he shall know of the doctrine." "Then shall ye know, *if ye follow on* to know the Lord." God "manifests" Himself to His real children, as He does not unto the world. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The principle here asserted is that, to understand the spiritual import of the Bible, the moral feelings of the inquirer must be in harmony with the truth itself. The eye cannot see unless it is *adapted* to the light ; the ear cannot hear, unless it is *adapted* to the laws of sound. So, too, the understanding is often at fault upon some of the truths of revelation, when the heart

is not in harmony with them. It is a pregnant fact, and one which the "wisdom of this world" cannot appreciate, that the Scriptures, when speaking of man in his intellectual capacity, do not speak of the understanding or the reasoning faculty, but of the "understanding heart," — making the *heart* to be the great intuitive organ. This is the psychology of the Bible. This "understanding heart," produced by the special influences of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, is the key which opens to the mind the wondrous system of truth contained in the Scriptures. Let any man, then, become a real Christian, and his mind will be so enlightened, his will so subdued, his affections so purified, that he will understand and cordially embrace the great doctrines of the Gospel. He will then have an *experimental* conviction of their consistency, sweetness, harmony, truth. He will no longer "see through a glass darkly." "The entrance of thy words giveth light." "It giveth understanding unto the simple."

Nor is there anything mystical or fanatical in this test. This mode of arriving at the truth has been tried and found successful by many of the strongest and best informed minds the world has even seen. Paul, Augustine, Bacon, Locke, Boyle, Boerhaave, More, Milton, Luther,

Newton, Wilberforce, Edwards, Washington, Hall, Fuller, and multitudes of others scarcely less distinguished, have experimentally *done* "the will" of God, and have thus been led to right results. Every deeply experienced Christian is himself a proof of the *infallibility* of this mode of arriving at the truth.

The illuminations of the Spirit in regeneration are wonderful. In thousands of cases difficulties have thus been solved, and doubts cleared up, which no human arguments could have removed. Sceptics have thus been rooted and grounded in the truth, and been brought not only to believe, but to adore. Indeed, the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit are an infallible remedy for all doubt and darkness.

If any man, then, is sincerely desirous of knowing what the Bible teaches, and yet is quite unable to make up his mind amid the conflicting opinions around him, let him at once become a real Christian, and he shall certainly "know of the doctrine." Let him humble himself at the foot of the Cross. Let him "receive the kingdom of Heaven, as a little child." No man ever tried this remedy in vain. The words of Anselm are replete with the highest wisdom:—"I do not know in order that I may believe, but I *believe* in order that I may *know*."

And the profound Pascal says, in the truest philosophy: — “Divine things are infinitely above nature, and God only can place them in the soul. He has designed that they shall pass from the *heart* into the *head*, and not from the *head* into the *heart*; and so, as it is necessary to know human things in order to love them, it is necessary to *love* divine things, in order to *know* them.” And again he affirms, “there is light enough in the Bible for those whose sincere wish it is to see; and just darkness enough to confound those who do not wish to see.” John Norton, of Boston, used to say, — “Men do not need new *light*, but new *sight*,” and that is the difficulty still. Dr. William Gordon, a converted sceptic, says, “I reasoned, and debated, and investigated, but I found no peace till I came to the gospel as a little child; till I received it as a babe. Then such a light was shed abroad in my heart, that I saw the whole scheme at once, and I found pleasure the most indescribable.” John Newton, when entangled by scepticism, resolved to test the truth of Christianity by seeking divine influence promised to prayer, and immediately found relief.

This experimental insight into the meaning of the Bible, is a witness whose testimony cannot be set aside. It is the evidence of con-

sciousness. Nothing can be more certain, nothing more conclusive. Paul says, "I *know* in whom I have believed." This is that wonderful tenacious faith which can be accounted for upon no worldly principles; a faith which has triumphantly sustained many a Christian at the stake, and made him sing, "None but Christ," "None but Christ," as the encircling flames have dismissed his joyful spirit to join "the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of the martyrs."

IV. Another mode of determining what religious doctrines are truly scriptural is, to inquire whether they are *acceptable or repulsive* to the feelings of the natural heart. St. Paul tells us that "the carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

This same test of truth is more formally set forth by the apostle John. Speaking of the "false teachers" which abounded then just as they do now, he says:—"They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." "We," that is, him-

self and his fellow-apostles, "are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us. He that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby," that is by this test, "know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." The fact is here affirmed by these inspired men, that the distinctive truths of the Bible are cordially received and loved by all real Christians, but that they are totally repugnant to the feelings of the "world," or of the natural heart. Now, by the application of this test, we have the highest presumptive proof that certain religious doctrines are true, and that certain others are false.

According to this test, any religious doctrines which are *distasteful* to the unrenewed heart, are *therefore* true. The very fact that they are *offensive* is the strongest presumptive evidence that they are *right*. Instead of being a sufficient reason, as many seem to believe, why they should be *rejected*, it is the scriptural reason why they should be *embraced*. And there is nothing arbitrary or unphilosophical in this test. It is based on the well-known fact of the exceeding sinfulness of the human heart,—of its utter aversion to holiness. "Vinegar upon nitre" will not more naturally produce a violent effervescence, than the peculiar truths of the Bible, when laid upon the naked feelings of the un-

sanctified heart. In such conditions, that heart will always recoil, and will frequently give expression to its strong displeasure. It was so in the days of Micaiah and Ezekiel, of Christ and the apostles, and it is so still.

Now, while we deeply deplore this opposition of the unrenewed heart to the peculiar doctrines of grace, it is of no small service in enabling us to determine *what the truth really is*. No unsanctified heart is opposed to error. It is satisfied with it. It wishes to have the preacher preach "smooth things, and prophecy deceits." And not unfrequently the pulpit yields to this demand, and when it does, the people sleep profoundly over their eternal interests. Worldliness prevails. An appalling indifference to the destiny of the soul, a growing laxity of morals, and a general deterioration of society are the natural and inevitable results.

But this was not the way in which prophets and apostles preached. It was not the way in which Peter addressed the awakened multitude on the day of Pentecost, nor Paul the jailer at Philippi, Felix on the judgment-seat, and Agrippa on the throne. It was not the way in which Luther and Calvin, Whitefield and Edwards, Davies and Griffin, Nettleton and Summerfield preached the Gospel. Nor is this

the practice of any minister who has been baptized in revivals of religion, and honored of God in the conversion of men. All pure revivals stamp the seal of the Divine approbation upon the truths which produce such results, and every man knows that they are the doctrines of the Evangelical System, and of none other. "Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord?" Put the truths of the Bible into the conscience of any unconverted man, and you put a "fire" into his conscience. "The word of God," rightly interpreted and properly felt, "is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

When, then, you find any religious doctrines which "cut you to the heart," which execute upon you the terrors of the law, which make you feel that you are a guilty and ruined man, which agitate you by day and allow you no rest by night, which convince you that you can never save yourself, and that God must do it or you will perish;—you may be morally certain that you have now arrived at the very verities of the Bible. Error does not make men feel so. Hold these truths, then, close up to your

heart and conscience. If your feelings recoil, press them the closer to your soul. If your heart rebels, urge them with still more awakening force upon yourself, and cease not the effort till you are slain by the truth, and brought, a trembling sinner, to the feet of Jesus for pardon, peace, and life.

On a review, then, of this whole subject, we see that there are four distinct methods of ascertaining what the Bible teaches: the *exegetical*, the *historical*, the *experimental*, and the *executive*. It would probably be presumptuous to affirm, that any one denomination hold the truths of the Bible in their *absolute perfectness*. But we certainly know of none which accepts and satisfies these four conditions so fully as the Orthodox Congregationalists. We know of none which applies to the Scriptures the common *rules for interpreting language* with more intelligence, and unflinching fidelity; none whose creed is so clearly accredited by the *concurrent belief* of the Christian Church in all the ages; none which has insisted, with so much earnestness, upon the most thorough Christian *experience*; and certainly none which has held and proclaimed, at least until within the last few years, the *distinguishing, humbling doctrines of grace*, with such clearness and power. These four

tests of truth, when faithfully applied, make sad havoc of hierarchical church politics and lax theologies;¹ of printed forms of worship, and showy clerical vestments; of the schismatic pretensions of all Churchmen, high and low, Romish and Episcopal, who will not acknowledge the validity of the ordination of any other clergymen, because they cannot, any more than themselves, trace back, in an unbroken line, their official pedigree to Peter; of that narrow spirit which, in its turn, unchurches the whole Christian world, because, forsooth, it will not baptize in the most inconvenient and uncomfortable of all possible modes, affirming, by a singular misconception of the nature of the Christian ordinances, that the burdensomeness of the mode is a proof of its truth; of that

¹ A hierarchy is a system of church government, where the power is usurped by Popes, Bishops, or ecclesiastical courts. It is grounded on the principle, that the people are incompetent to think and act and vote in their own religious affairs, and that they must be governed by a spiritual aristocracy. The Roman Catholic system is a hierarchy, Episcopacy is a hierarchy, Methodist Episcopacy is a hierarchy, and Presbyterianism is a partial hierarchy. Congregationalism, in distinction from them all, vests the power, where it should be, in the hands of the people, and educates them, as all men should be educated both in church and state, to understand their rights and to intelligently govern themselves. It holds that the people are competent to do their own thinking and acting and voting. This is in harmony with the evident simplicity and republicanism of the primitive churches.

superficial theory, which virtually severs our connection with Adam, which holds that sin is originated, sometime after our birth, by the action of the "lower propensities," and, with a few saving references to the Holy Spirit, makes all the regeneration we need the result of the self-determination of the will; and finally of that system of rationalism, which rejects the more substantive parts of the Bible, which requires nothing but a decently moral life to fit us for heaven, and yet refuses to admit that those whose lives are *not* moral will be "damned." These and similar errors have no basis in the real teachings of the Bible, but that great system of doctrine, which has been the support and the rejoicing of confessors, saints, and martyrs, in all the centuries, is there luminously revealed.





THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY AND SLAVERY.

AN article which has been elaborately prepared by "A Massachusetts Clergyman," and published by the New York Observer and the Puritan Recorder, presumptively with their approbation of its contents, is worthy of respectful consideration. If, however, upon a thorough examination, it be found to contain fundamental sophistries, it only proves, for the thousandth time, that sophistries, especially upon warmly controverted subjects, are "capable of deceiving very respectable minds."

I shall attempt to expose the leading "sophisms" in the critique which "A Massachusetts Clergyman," has lately published in the papers above mentioned, upon Dr. Wayland's Letter to the Tract Society, and then leave the public to judge of the merits of the case. "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."

I. The first sophistry, in the article referred

to, lies in what the author calls the "implied assumption" of Dr. Wayland, that the Tract Society has "bound itself to publish a *specific* condemnation of *every* form of immorality." And again, he says, Dr. Wayland is guilty of "the grave logical error of assuming that the Society is under moral obligation to publish on *every* subject, which has," according to its Constitution, "anything to do with the interests of vital godliness and sound morality." He then argues the point as follows:—

"The Society is under no such obligation. It is at full liberty, legally and morally, to use its discretion in the selection of subjects on which it will publish, and on which it will refrain from publishing. If in the exercise of its best discretion, it sees fit to leave the publishing of Tracts on Temperance, wholly to the American Temperance Union, or other Temperance Societies, it has a perfect right to do so," etc.

But Dr. Wayland nowhere "implies," so far as I can discover, that the Society is under any obligation to publish on *every conceivable subject*, which has anything to do with "the interests of vital godliness and sound morality," for then "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." For "A Massachusetts Clergyman" to attempt to

convict Dr. Wayland of a "sophism," by pushing his argument to this most extreme limit, is to do violence to the dictates of common sense. It is to convict himself of great unfairness. Dr. Wayland's language is to be interpreted according to its most natural and obvious import. While he does not mean to include in the Society's duty every *possible* relation and form of truth, he does mean to include all those subjects which are the most important, of which Slavery is certainly one. The extreme limit to which "A Massachusetts Clergyman" would crowd him, is clearly controlled by two considerations. One is, that the Society's funds may never be sufficient to allow them to publish on every subject which may *possibly* have something "to do with the interests of vital godliness and sound morality;" and the other is, their "best discretion" may not allow it, if their funds should. But is it to be supposed that the subject of Slavery has such a remote and unpractical relation to "the interests of vital godliness and sound morality," especially in these United States, as to *exclude* it from the category of the Society's obligations? Is it to be believed, in this nineteenth century of the reign of Christ, when the uprising of the nations the world over shows their determination to shake

off every species of despotism, civil and ecclesiastical; and when Slavery as it exists in this country, — professedly the freest on the face of the earth, — is the scorn and abhorrence of all Christendom, that a Tract Society, claiming to be *national*, ought to be silent on that momentous theme? Is it credible that the subject is not *important* enough to receive the notice of such a catholic and Christian Institution? Indeed, so far from its being excluded from the Society's duty, because it has scarcely any appreciable relation to human affairs, there is perhaps none within the wide circle of terrestrial interests, which has more points of contact with "vital godliness and sound morality." It surrounds us like the atmosphere, — ever present and all pervading. It meets us in all our relations, civil and political, domestic and ecclesiastical, moral and religious. Attention to it cannot therefore be set aside by the logical refinement, that the Society has not "undertaken" to publish on "*all*" subjects which relate to "the interests of vital godliness and sound morality."

But "A Massachusetts Clergyman" says that "if the Society, in the exercise of its best discretion, sees fit to leave the publication of Tracts" on certain subjects, "to other Societies, it has a perfect right to do so;" and, by parity

of reasoning, "if the Society, in the exercise of its best discretion, sees fit" to publish on the subject of Slavery, "it has a perfect right to do so." This incautious admission is fatal to his argument. For what is the present "best discretion" of the Society, as to publishing Tracts on Slavery? Why, plainly, that they *ought* to publish such Tracts. Being in some doubt what their duty was in the case, the Society chose a Committee of fifteen most intelligent clergymen and laymen, to make a careful and thorough inquiry into this very point. After a prayerful and elaborate investigation of the whole subject they reported that though the "political aspects" of Slavery cannot be meddled with, "those moral duties which grow out of the existence of Slavery, as well as those moral evils and vices which it is known to promote, *can* and *ought* to be discussed" in the publications of the Society. At its last annual meeting, this report, after solemn discussion, was unanimously adopted, and the present "best discretion" of the Society therefore plainly is, that it *ought* to publish Tracts on that subject. Though it has never "undertaken" to publish on "*all*" topics which, by possibility, have something "to do with the interests of vital godliness and sound morality," they have now "under-

taken," "in the exercise of their best discretion," to publish on Slavery, and it is hoped that they will not stultify that "discretion." The allegation, therefore, which "A Massachusetts Clergyman" has made, that Dr. Wayland holds that the Society must publish on Slavery, because it has undertaken to publish on *all* subjects relating to "the interests of vital godliness and sound morality," is incorrect, and his argument in proof of such assumption is a specimen of *special pleading* which destroys itself. His own assumption rather is, that the Society has a moral right to suppress a part of the will of God, even against the dictates of its "best discretion."

II. "A Massachusetts Clergyman" alleges that the reason why the Rev. John Summerfield, at the time the Tract Society was formed, proposed to strike out from the first draft of the Constitution the words, "evangelical Christians of all denominations," and substitute therefor the words, "all evangelical Christians," was to prevent the Tracts from being tested by the *Creeds* of the several contracting parties. The writer of this article was present at the time that amendment was proposed and adopted; and he can truly say, so far as his vivid recollections of that novel and exciting scene serve him, that the only object was to *simplify the arrange-*

ment, by getting rid of the word "denominations." Such a Society was then nearly a "new thing under the sun," and the great problem to be solved was, how individual members of the various evangelical communions could become members of a common Society, by the payment of a sum of money, exclude everything which was offensive in the term "denominations," from their articles of union, and publish Tracts that should not interfere with their dogmatic peculiarities. How was it possible, then, to guard against such interference, except by bringing all the Tracts to the test of their respective formularies of faith? Mr. Summerfield's object in his amendment was, by no means, to prevent the Tracts from being thus tested, but only to make the plan as simple and unobjectionable as possible. It was to create a Society which could work on ground common to all the evangelical denominations; and that could be done only by comparing their Tracts, not with the opinions of every member of the great "sacramental host," but with the doctrines of their several creeds.

"A Massachusetts Clergyman" also misinterprets, as I think, the sixth article in the Constitution of the Society, which declares that "no two members of the Publishing Committee shall

be from the same ecclesiastical connection." The object here was simply *distributive*, and not at all to prevent the Tracts from being tested by the *creeds* of the associated parties. As many as six or seven denominations were concerned in the formation of the Tract Society, but the first Publishing Committee consisted of four gentlemen only, the Rev. Drs. Milnor, Spring and Edwards, and Rev. Mr. Summerfield. The sole object of the sixth article therefore was, to *distribute* the members of this Committee as widely as possible among the different denominations, that no one might have a preponderating influence, and then there were not enough to go round. The true interpretation of this article is therefore in harmony with the view taken of it by Dr. Wayland, and not with that of "A Massachusetts Clergyman."

To suppose, as "A Massachusetts Clergyman" does, that the Publishing Committee are not bound to test their Tracts by the *creeds* of the evangelical churches, nor by the personal opinions of every *individual* member, nor yet indeed *to conform to the requirements of the Society itself*, as expressed by their unanimous vote at the last annual meeting, is to erect that Committee into an entirely *independent* body. It is to confer on them *autocratic* power. It is to

make them amenable in no degree to their constituents for the character of the Tracts they issue. It is almost needless to say, that, in these democratic times, such a principle, carried out, will work the ruin of any institution, whether religious or political. Especially will it destroy any Benevolent Society, which is entirely dependent on the Christian public for its funds. Besides, I am credibly informed, that this is also the opinion of some others of the distinguished friends of the Tract Society, who approve of the present course of the Publishing Committee. But a doctrine which is suicidal, is therefore absurd.

“To this complexion it has come at last,” because “A Massachusetts Clergyman” and those who think with him, are unwilling that the Tracts should be subjected to the only test provided by the founders of the Society,—the only test indeed which is pertinent to the case,—the only test which can determine questions, *as between the various evangelical denominations* who were parties to the arrangement, and not *as between any other parties*, political or reformatory, sectional or religious.

That the subject of Slavery was not intended to be *excluded* by the only restriction in the Constitution of the Society is clear, because it

was not referred to in any of the debates upon its adoption as one of the things to be guarded against, and also because that subject was actually presented in some of the earlier publications of the Society, without any offence to the South. Cotton Mather's *Essays to do Good*, and the *Memoirs of Mary Lundie Duncan* contained important views of Slavery, which then "received the approbation of all evangelical Christians" in the Southern States. It was several years after the publication of those books before a lisp of objection was heard; and if there has been since that time any change of public feeling in that section of the country, it is one of those changes for which the Constitution has made no provision, against which it was never intended to guard, and which therefore calls for no change of the original policy of the Society.

It is no reply to this to say, that the founders of the Society *would have excluded* Slavery, if they had foreseen the present division of opinion on that subject among "evangelical Christians." What they *would have done* is simply a matter of opinion, respecting which there would probably be as great a diversity of judgment among us, as there is upon the main question itself, and therefore it can form no proper element for the decision of the point now before the Christian

public. What they *actually did* is the only question now to be determined; and the historical and collateral evidence that they did *not* intend to exclude Slavery is abundant and cumulative.

In settling disputed questions, it is oftentimes of much service to advert to *first principles*. Recurring, then, to the great object for which the Tract Society was formed, which was "to diffuse a knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of sinners, and to promote the interests of vital godliness and sound morality," and coupling this with the fact recently announced by the Tract Society in Boston, that the Southern States had at that time "their local Societies and distinct fields of effort, which were yielded up at once, and became merged in the great plan of a National Evangelical Union," and all this without demanding or expecting that the Society would be silent on Slavery; these facts, I submit, prove conclusively what its original course was, and what its present course ought to be.

The only way to break the force of this argument would seem to be for a new denomination to arise at the South, claiming to be "evangelical," and yet adopt a Creed which shall teach "the moral excellence of Slavery as it there ex-

ists; that it is an institution which is authorized and supported by the Bible; that the members may buy and sell their fellow-men; that they may break up and separate families whenever their pecuniary interests demand it; and that, in their treatment of their female servants, they may disregard the great law of chastity;" and with this Creed and the price of membership in their hands, present themselves to the Tract Society, and demand admission to its privileges, on the ground that they are "evangelical Christians;" and on being admitted, turn round and say that the Society must publish nothing more on Slavery, because it is not "calculated to receive their approbation." When all this is done, in form, and the great "evangelical" brotherhood consent to recognize them as a part of their fraternity, then indeed will a bar be erected across the track of the Society, which, according to the Constitution, will effectually prohibit them from publishing anything upon that subject. But until this or some parallel exigency shall arise, that instrument does not prevent them from discussing, in a fraternal and Christian spirit, those moral duties which grow out of the existence of Slavery, as well as those moral evils and vices which it is known to promote.

III. "A Massachusetts Clergyman" affirms that "Dr. Wayland's argument, boldly carried out to its honest result, would lead to the conclusion that the Constitution of the Society, even according to his own interpretation of it, is essentially *sinful*; that the formation of the Society, with such a Constitution, was a *sin*; that its continuance and activity have been a *continuance in sin*; and that our first and only duty concerning it is, to terminate its existence."

This inference from Dr. Wayland's premises is so utterly preposterous, that it would seem like a work of supererogation to attempt to refute it. But as it has been made apparently with much assurance, it shall be seriously considered. And there are two or three modes of reasoning which meet it successfully.

One is, to judge whether the Society originated in sin and continues in sin, by examining its *fruits*. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." When, then, we remember the eminent Christian character of its founders; the spirit of earnest prayer which attended its organization; the sublime disinterestedness which adjusted all the details of the plan; the countless, the inconceivable blessings it has conferred on the country and the world, in the salvation of multitudes of souls, and in the

spiritual edification of multitudes more; is it possible that any intelligent and fair-minded man can pretend that it was "altogether born in sin," because it restricted itself to the publication of such portions of divine truth as are "calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical Christians?" No man can derive such a conclusion from the premises, till his desire to carry a point has got the better of his judgment.

But there is another method of meeting the inference. By universal admission, the Tract Society was formed to promote the great cause of evangelical morality. That cause can be effectually subserved, if the Society never publishes a syllable on infant baptism, or the mode of baptism, or falling from grace, or the parity of the ministry. But it cannot be faithfully sustained if it holds its peace when Slavery, which Wesley pronounced to be the "sum of all villainies," and which made Jefferson, himself a slaveholder, "tremble for his country" when he remembered that "God is just,"—is connived at by its publications. If it abstain from condemning, in a temperate and Christian spirit, a system so prolific of immoralities, how can it be faithful to the best interests of man, and the honor of Christ? The moral goodness of the Society can therefore be demonstrably

shown while it publishes Tracts on Slavery, but refrains from discussing those comparatively unimportant points, on which "evangelical Christians" happen to differ.

The absurdity of the inference can be shown in another form. If the Society was "shapen in iniquity," because it does not publish on all subjects where "evangelical Christians" differ, then *the Church and the pulpit* are also founded in sin; for the very best of the evangelical denominations cannot be said, without presumption, to hold and preach the truth of God in its *absolute perfectness*. If the conclusion is valid against the Tract Society, it is equally valid against the purest church and the most orthodox pulpit in Christendom. If, for the reason given, the "existence" of the Society should be "terminated," for the same reason the Church and the pulpit ought to be overthrown. An argument which proves too much, proves nothing. Dr. Wayland's views, therefore, are not logically exposed to the inference for which "A Massachusetts Clergyman" seeks to make them responsible.

IV, "A Massachusetts Clergyman" takes especial offence at the position of Dr. Wayland, that the Society is under a *moral obligation* to publish Tracts on Slavery. When Dr. Wayland asks, "Have we any right to withhold any

part of divine truth, because men are unwilling to receive it?" he evidently means by "we," himself and his associates as members of the Tract Society, or, more strictly speaking, the Tract Society itself. The consistency of his argument requires this construction. All therefore which "A Massachusetts Clergyman" says about "we," as meaning the Christian public and not the Tract Society, is mere surplusage.

Dr. Wayland's avowed position is, that *the Society is morally bound* to publish Tracts on Slavery, "written in the spirit of Christian love." Against this position "A Massachusetts Clergyman" arrays a formidable host of objections, so far as numbers are concerned, and the list, I apprehend, might be largely increased. He holds that the Society is not bound to do it for these reasons: that "every Free State is bearing testimony against Slavery continually;" that our "laws" condemn it; that most of the "religious denominations" in the land have condemned it; that "good men" at the South do not "desire" the Society to speak out on that subject; that it would be an "intolerable embarrassment" to them; that it would "annihilate their usefulness;" that it would "enable wicked men and interested politicians to raise a louder outcry;" that such Tracts will not be

“read” at the South; that it would give the people there some ground for saying that the Society has “gone over to the Abolitionists;” and that it fraternizes with Garrison and radicals of his stripe, who, they conjecture, “encouraged Nat Turner to get up the Southampton Insurrection in 1831.”

Singularly enough, however, for the force of his argument, he concedes that all these objections of the South would be “grossly unjust.” If they are “grossly unjust,” it is no compliment to the intelligence and candor of the South to entertain them, or to the moral nerve of the Tract Society to be intimidated by them.

But admit the worst. Admit that this terrible avalanche of evils will descend upon the country if the Society publishes on the subject of Slavery, how does that affect the question of its *duty*? I know full well that times, and seasons, and circumstances, and probable results are oftentimes to be considered in determining questions of duty, where *the revealed will of God has not* already settled the point. But where it *has*, expediency has no place. The doctrine of “A Massachusetts Clergyman” is, that it is not *expedient*, in the present state of feeling at the South, for the Society to publish anything on Slavery. This casuistry might be good, if Jesus

Christ had not commanded us to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." I am not aware that the Tract Society is *excepted* in the terms of the apostolic commission. Nor can *expediency* be allowed to come in here, and exonerate it from obligation to discharge its duty fully and faithfully in the premises, agreeably to the spirit of its Constitution, as interpreted by every contemporary and historical light. The command to publish the Gospel has no limitation. It must, of course, be proclaimed to "Greek and Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free." Whether they will "hear" it, is not the question. Whether even "good men," and "evangelical Christians," at the South, however distinguished "by the holy beauty of their lives," will hear it, is not the question. Whether it will "embarrass" them, "or annihilate their influence," or make "interested politicians" more blatant, or identify the Society with the "Abolitionists," is not the question. Expediency cannot override the revealed will of God in the case. Abstinence from duty will never cure the evil. Slavery, if let alone, will perish in Charleston, about the time that caste, if let alone, will perish in Benares. Fidelity to God and man is the only way to destroy it. The question which the Tract Society is

called upon to decide is not a new one. It was settled long ago by Micaiah and Nathan, by Peter and John, by Luther and Knox, and by a host of martyrs and confessors, who thought that they "ought to obey God rather than men." But has it come to this, that, in this most enlightened age of the world, and in this land where the spirit of the Puritans, the Covenanters, and the Huguenots still lingers, *expediency* must set aside the positive requirement of Heaven? Has it come to this, that the abnormal and barbarous institution of Slavery, so out of all sympathy with the spirit of the age, must prevent the American Tract Society from exposing those "moral evils and vices which it is *known* to promote?" And, finally, has it come to this, that the encroachments of the slave-power upon our civil and political rights, must be allowed to stalk, *pari passu*, over all the comities of ecclesiastical intercourse between the North and the South; and into the American Bible Society, and demand that it expunge those headings to the chapters of the Bible which denounce Slavery, though they have been consecrated for centuries in the hallowed associations of Christians of every name; and now into the American Tract Society, and require, on pain of the secession of all the "evan-

gical Christians" in the Southern States, that it seal its lips in eternal silence over wrongs at which humanity and Christianity alike stand aghast? Whatever may be the opinion of a few "evangelical Christians" and clergymen at the North, who are so extremely conservative as to be unable to perceive the obvious intent of the Constitution of the Tract Society, it is hoped that the Publishing Committee will yet interpret that document as the Society itself has done, and govern themselves accordingly. If, unhappily, they refuse to do so, "enlargement and deliverance" will unquestionably "arise" from some other source.¹

¹ The prediction, if such it may be called, in the closing sentence, has since been fulfilled. The Publishing Committee of the Society in New York *did* persist in misinterpreting their Constitution and in refusing to publish tracts on slavery, and as a consequence, the American Tract Society at Boston dissolved its connection with the other, resumed its original *status* as an independent institution, and publishes tracts upon slavery as well as other sins. This fact, together with the outbreak of the Southern rebellion for the spread and perpetuation of slavery, have compelled the Society at New York to act more in harmony with the intent of its Constitution; and the institution of slavery, which has long been a disturbing force in our religious as well as political concerns, will probably be overthrown by the present war.

April, 1864.



ORIGINAL SIN.

WHAT is the meaning of Eph. ii. 3? —

Καὶ ἡμεν τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς, ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί, —

And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

The terms τέκνα ὀργῆς translated in the English version, “children of wrath,” by common consent, mean that the Christians at Ephesus, to whom this Epistle was addressed, possessed, before their conversion, a moral character which was deserving of the wrath of God, or of the punishment which is due to sin. ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί mean, according to Bloomfield and other authorities, not only others, but *all* others, *i. e.*, the rest of mankind. The *degree* of depravity in the individual then is *entire*, the *extent* of it in the species *universal*. Thus far all is plain. But what is the meaning of φύσει? Though this word was understood by nearly all commentators, from Augustine down through fourteen or fifteen centuries, to affirm that the *nature itself* of all men is corrupt or depraved, yet it is one of the *loci vexatissimi* of some of the modern critics. Pelagius, a British monk of the fifth

century, was the first writer of much distinction who denied that φύσει meant human nature itself, and that the Bible anywhere affirms the doctrine of what is called original sin. Pelagius has been followed by Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, England, Dr. Nathaniel W. Taylor, of New Haven, Connecticut, Dr. Emmons, of Franklin, Professor Park, of Andover, and others of less note, and by the Unitarian divines generally. And yet these distinguished men are but exceptions to the general belief of evangelical Christendom. The doctrine of original sin, supposed to be taught by φύσει and by many other passages in the Bible, incorporated also into nearly all the Reformed Confessions of Faith, and held, almost without dissent, by the great divines of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries both in Europe and in this country, is still the current belief of truly evangelical men the world over. But inasmuch as the question has been raised whether φύσει does really teach that human *nature itself* is corrupt or depraved, it has become my duty, by the vote of this body,¹ to do what I can to throw light on the subject, though I am deeply sensible that it is in my power to do but little, after all the learning and acumen which have been expended upon it by the ablest men

¹ The Suffolk North Association of Congregational Ministers.

in the Christian Church. With all deference to the opinions of others, I must therefore endeavor to express my own, however humble they may be.

The question before us is one and simple. It is whether by φύσει the Apostle meant to teach us that the *nature itself* of men is in an abnormal or morally wrong condition, or, in the language of technical theology, whether it is *sinful*. That he does affirm it to be so, appears to me quite clear for the reasons now to be presented. It is necessary, however, to premise, that this abnormal or sinful state is not a part of what philosophers have called the *pura naturalia* of humanity, such as the moral sense, the reason, the judgment, the memory. All these belonged to man previous to the fall, but his *sinfulness*, as the result of the fall, though innate, is not one of the original qualities of his nature. Original sin, therefore, is not original in the same sense that conscience, reason, judgment, taste are original, but original in the sense that it exists in every individual of the human race antecedently to moral action, is traceable through the long line of his ancestors back to the first sin of Adam, and is the direct, inevitable, and guilty consequence of that sin. How all this consists with the goodness of God and the free moral

agency of men, has, properly speaking, no connection at all with the inquiry before us. That inquiry has respect simply to a *matter of fact* which should not be embarrassed by any collateral questions, and if theologians would be content to leave it just where the Bible leaves it, among the "secret things that belong unto the Lord our God," and which are "too high for us," it would seem that the Bible would be more correctly interpreted, and unity of opinion might be hoped for.

That the *φύσις itself* is depraved, this passage teaches,

I. By the *character with which it is contrasted* in the context. It is contrasted with that into which the Ephesian churches were brought by grace. The antithesis is not between what they became by grace and what they were by education or habit; nor between what they became by grace and what they had been by yielding to the power of their "lower propensities"; but between their *natural* state and their state by the renewing mercy of God. And the antithesis would be neither pertinent nor forceful unless their real original character was intended to be set forth, as the thing to be *contrasted with* their state by conversion. It is making a false issue with the Apostle, as Pelagius, Dr. Taylor of

New Haven, and others have done, by interpreting φύσις as something which is different from, or subsequent to, their original character. This view is confirmed by the best authorities. Dr. Bloomfield, one of the most intelligent and candid critics, says that “φύσει here has been *tortured* by many learned commentators to yield some such sense as shall exclude the doctrine of the *natural corruption* of the human heart, (namely, either custom or acquired habit,) yet in vain, for in all the passages cited the sense *natural disposition* always peeps forth.” And he further says that his “knowledge of the classical writers” enables him to confirm the sagacious remark of Dr. Scott, “that the word was never used of any other customs than such as resulted from *innate* propensities.”

This view of the subject is accredited by the deepest experience of Christians. When they look into their hearts, they feel that they are *sinners*, and they feel this without any regard to their actions or emotions. They habitually feel that *before* all action they are sinners, and *before* all emotion they are sinners. This is their common consciousness. A thorough examination of themselves makes them feel that their very *natures* are abnormal, wrong, sinful, — that the trouble lies deeper than all action, — that it is

a *state* of sin. Our own *consciousness*, then, correctly interprets the passage before us.

II. The different *meanings* of φύσις in the Bible show how it is to be understood in this passage. It is used in the following senses.

1. In the sense of *natural birth*.

Gal. ii. 15. Ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι, καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί. "We were Jews by nature," that is, we were born Jews. Here it is used, as in the text under consideration, to denote what the Jews were by birth.

2. It is used in the sense of *natural light*.

Rom. ii. 14. Ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα, φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῇ. "For when the Gentiles who have not the law do *by nature* the things contained in the law," that is, the Gentiles have sufficient *natural light* to do many things which are prescribed by the written law.

3. Another meaning of φύσις is *custom*.

1 Cor. xi. 14. Ἡ οὐδὲ αὐτὴ ἡ φύσις διδάσκει ὑμᾶς, ὅτι ἀνὴρ μὲν εἰς κομᾶ, ἀτιμία αὐτῷ ἐστι; "Doth not even nature" or custom "teach you that if a man hath long hair, it is a shame unto him?" But even here, φύσις seems to insist on being understood *nature* quite as much as *custom*, for as President Edwards well says of this text, it is quite as much a dictate of *nature* as of *custom* that a man should not wear "long hair" like the other sex.

4. Another sense in which φύσις is used in the New Testament is that of *kinds* or *species*.

James iii. 7. Πᾶσα γὰρ φύσις θηρίων, etc. "For every *kind*" or *species* "of beasts is tamed or hath been tamed of mankind." That φύσει in the passage on which this article is founded cannot be used in this sense is quite evident, because the Apostle was not discussing the different species or races of men, but the original character of all men. It must therefore be understood as teaching us what is the original moral character of the entire race.

III. *Parallel passages* corroborate this interpretation. "Behold," says David, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." It was not the sin of his mother which awoke the hot anguish of the 51st Psalm, as some of the opponents of the doctrine of original sin have alleged in order to get rid of that vital truth, but it was his *own* sin. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and have done this evil in thy sight." There is something in Dr. Watts's versification of this Psalm which meets the profoundest depths of Christian feeling in every pious heart, and it must therefore be the true interpretation: —

Lord, I am vile, conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean;

Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts the race and taints us all.

Soon as we draw our infant breath
The seeds of sin grow up for death ;
Thy law demands a perfect heart,
But we 're defiled in every part.

Behold I fall before Thy face,
My only refuge is Thy grace ;
No outward forms can make me clean,
The leprosy lies deep within.¹

The oft-quoted exclamations of Job, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" "What is man that he should be clean? And he that is born of woman that he should be righteous?"—the declaration of God by Isaiah, "Thou was called a transgressor from the womb,"—the circumstantial description of the hideous character of both the Jews and the Gentiles in the first three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, to say nothing of many other passages, do, I think, prove either the *original* as well as the desperate sinfulness of our race, or that the Bible was made to mislead men. Plain common sense has always understood these texts to teach the *native* sinfulness of men,—human

¹ This Psalm has been excluded from the *Church Psalmody* and altered in the *Sabbath Hymn Book*, on the ground, forsooth, that it is not lyrical! Is it not, rather, because the doctrine is offensive?

philosophy has to be called in to make them teach anything else.

IV. The *profoundest analysis* of the text, in its *metaphysical aspect*, demonstrates the original corruption of human nature. Dr. Emmons said, "Original sin is a lie;" and Dr. Taylor, in his celebrated contest with Dr. Tyler on this subject, hard pressed by his antagonist and following the lead of Emmons, endeavored to escape from the dilemma in which he was involved by setting up this distinction, that our nature *itself* is not depraved, but that we are depraved *by* nature. He stoutly argued that this is all that this text affirms, and that therefore the doctrine of original sin is not taught here. It is hardly a euphemism to say that any statement of that great man is a mere quibble, and yet I know of no more proper term to designate the real fact in this case. On the one hand, he rejected the doctrine of original sin, and yet on the other, was unwilling to be crowded over upon the Unitarian ground, namely, that all our sinfulness is the result of *bad example*. He therefore set up the absurd distinction, that our *nature* is not sinful, but that we are sinful *by* nature. Now I ask any man, however acute and penetrating he may be, to apply his mind to the point, and see if he can discover any real differ-

ence between the two statements. We can see a difference between being sinful *by nature* in distinction from being made sinful by *example* or *custom*. We can see a difference between having a sinful *nature*, and coming into the world with a nature which has *no* moral character, and which, by some undescribed and inconceivable process, becomes sinful afterwards; but in that case we should not be sinful *by nature*. These distinctions are familiar to all persons of reflection; but what is the difference between having a sinful *nature* and being sinful *by nature*? Let every man expend upon it his most concentrated attention; let him press on to the very farthest "limits of religious thought;" and will he not find, in the last analysis of which the human mind is capable, that they resolve themselves into one and the same thing? We turn a telescope upon the *nebulæ* of the heavens, and we resolve every square inch of the view into hundreds of separate stars, but our mental telescopes, directed ever so penetratingly upon the question now before us, can discover no new truth, but simply a parallax of the old one. The question, under such an intense scrutiny, refuses to be a question. The proposition insists that it is no question at all; and we come back from our investigations with

the conviction, that it is a mere strife of words, — logomachy only. We are therefore, I think, compelled to admit that if we are sinful *by nature*, the *nature itself* is sinful.

All this is made plain by a very familiar illustration. A lion is a carnivorous animal; and we say his *nature* is carnivorous, he is carnivorous *by nature*, and he is *naturally* carnivorous; and we use all these phrases convertibly, — meaning by them one and the same thing. And all these phrases are used not only popularly, but philosophically as well. If we are asked to define what that nature *is*, we can only say, “we do not know.” Neither scalpel nor microscope can detect it. It was not his physical organism which made him carnivorous, but his *nature made his organism*. So, too, human beings have a sinful *nature*, they are sinful *by nature*, and they are *naturally* sinful; and there is no difference at all in the import of these phraseologies. They mean one and the same thing; and that theory is hard pressed which seeks to find in them any difference of meaning. The moral *nature* of men, then, is sinful, as well as all the moral acts and the moral neglects “which proceed from it.”

According to the theory of Emmons, Taylor, Park, and their followers, that our *nature* is not

sinful, there is no logical connection between the first sin of the child, and anything else there is within him; for on that theory our connection with Adam is so attenuated into nothing, that there is an unabridged chasm between what Adam did, and what the child does. Dr. Taylor saw the chasm, and attempted to span it by a pontoon bridge, — if the incongruity of a hydrographic figure may be pardoned, — of biases, tendencies, proclivities, and I know not what other metaphysical planks, which are neither holy nor sinful. But pontoon bridges, after all, are but a poor substitute for granite, and are never used except in cases of special emergency. Granite is the true material, and that solid and indestructible masonry orthodox men find in the doctrine of original sin. Emmons saw the chasm, and with characteristic firmness of nerve, met the issue squarely by affirming that “God is the author of sin,” and that “*He operates directly on the hearts of children* when they first become moral agents” to induce them to sin.¹ Bold and revolting, not to say blasphemous, as this averment is, it is nevertheless the only ground which can be consistently and logically taken by all men who deny the doctrine of original sin. Emmons was also consistent with

¹ *Emmons's Works*, edition 1842, Vol. IV. p. 508.

himself in holding the annihilation of infants because they have no moral character, and all New School men, to be consistent, should hold that doctrine too. But to carry his consistency fully out, Emmons should also have discarded the rite of infant baptism; for why baptize an infant who has no moral character and is to be annihilated? Dr. Emmons was the schoolman of the nineteenth century, and about the only specimen of that mediæval fossil which this century has produced. Indissolubly wedded to his own philosophy about "exercises," feeling more than a paternal fondness for his own theories, quick, sharp, and curt in the manner of expressing his thoughts, pragmatistical and decided in his notions, reasoning with a vast appearance of logic, but very often with no logic at all, — he was not the man to shrink from facing any of the consequences of his system; and hence, while claiming to be a Calvinist of the "straitest sect," he cut clean and clear through the theology of Calvin, of the Westminster Divines, of Edwards, and of Smalley his theological instructor, and was not afraid of statements which have appalled the sensibilities of all other men. He was the real founder of the New School theology, but as that theology repudiated the direct divine causation of evil, he, in turn, just

before he died, repudiated the New Haven system. He saw that there is no standing place for his theory, that there is no such thing as original sin and that all sin consists in "exercises," unless it is admitted that God produces, by a direct act of his power, the first sinful emotion in every human heart. The New School men, less consistent than himself, rejected his dogma that "God is the author of sin," though they held to the "exercises," and before he went into his grave he rejected them.¹

It seemed to be necessary to present this bird's-eye view of this history of opinions in New England for the last thirty years, inasmuch as they have all grown out of the subject before us, regarded in its *metaphysical* aspects and relations. The wide divergence of all New School men from the theology of Calvin and Edwards, and from all the leading divines of the seven-

¹ The late Dr. Woods, of Andover, in his "Theology of the Puritans," distinctly says, that the peculiar views of Hopkins, Emmons, and Taylor do *not* belong to New England Theology, properly so called, according to the admissions of those writers themselves. Some of their followers, however, by a perversion of the well-known historical facts in the case, are now laboring to convince the world that their peculiar and erroneous views are the real theology of New England, and by a sort of clerical *coup d'etat*, they are seeking to get possession of all the high places of influence, and thus diffuse sentiments with which New England from the beginning has had no sympathy.

teenth and eighteenth centuries, shows that they are at war with the *consensus* of the churches, and, therefore, at war with the Bible; for it cannot be supposed that the churches have all been wrong upon this important subject, until the present generation came upon the stage. The Westminster Confession and Catechism are still the recognized standard of orthodoxy among all our ecclesiastical bodies, but New School men receive them only for "substance of doctrine," with so many mental reservations and so many new interpretations of their terms, that it really amounts to no acceptance of them all. The *consensus* of evangelical Christendom, however, will at last prevail; and the doctrine of Original Sin, now so flatly denied by some, or so gingerly accepted by others, will be heartily embraced and permanently held by the churches. This brief history of the doctrine is important, because a true history of the doctrine is a history of the true doctrine.

V. The truth that human nature *itself* is corrupt, is confirmed by the general voice of the churches, *as expressed in their symbols*. Truth, I know, cannot always be determined by majorities, and yet the human mind is so constituted that it cannot but be affected by this consideration. "In a multitude of counsellors there is

safety." Perhaps the doctrine of Original Sin cannot abide the famous test of truth, laid down by Vincent of Lirens, "*Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*;"—it must have been believed everywhere, always, and by all,—and there are very few truths indeed which can; for there have always been minds distorted and prejudiced enough to disbelieve truths which are in themselves intuitive to the most common understandings. But an immense majority of evangelical and truly pious men have always held this doctrine and hold it now, notwithstanding all the modern objections, and with greater tenacity, if possible, than ever. The numerous objections to the doctrine of Original Sin, often inconsistent with each other and with themselves, and which are *therefore* shown to be unsound; the insufficiency of all other theories to account for the deep and universal sinfulness of our race; and the superficial views of Atonement and Regeneration which have grown out of them all,—have served to convince the most candid and reflecting men that the commonly received doctrine must be the true one. Time would fail to quote all the Confessions of Faith, which in the various Christian ages have solemnly affirmed this cardinal article of Christianity; the leading ones only

can be referred to. The Synod of Dort held that "all men become depraved through the propagation of a sinful *nature*." The Confession of Helvetia says,—"We take sin to be that *natural* corruption of man which is derived from our first parents unto us all." The Confession of Bohemia or the Waldenses, says of original sin,— "It is engendered in us and is hereditary." The French Confession says of man,— "His *nature* is become altogether defiled." The Church of England, in the Thirty-nine Articles, affirms that "original sin is the *fault* and *corruption* of the *nature* of every man that is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam." The Augsburg Confession says,— "The very *corruption* of man's *nature* is derived from Adam." The Westminster Assembly declare that "a *corrupted nature* was conveyed from our first parents to all their posterity. From this original corruption, whereby we are all utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions." The Synod at Cambridge and the Synod at Saybrook adopted and reaffirmed, *in ipsissimis verbis*, the doctrine of the Westminster Divines.

And suppose, now, that a large and highly respectable convention of men, who are dissatisfied with this doctrine, should be called, and they

should formally reject it, and insert in their new Confession the theory of Dr. Emmons, or Dr. Taylor, or Dr. Park, it would be no more accepted as any authority by the evangelical world than Sawyer's Translation of the Bible. So far then as names have or ought to have any influence in deciding a question of this kind, the believers in the doctrine of Original Sin certainly have the benefit of the argument.

The early fathers of New England, in their hatred of prelatie and Popish authority, threw away altogether the argument from "analogy of faith." They thought it savored too much of Rome. But there is real weight and authority in the argument, and the friends of truth should use it. What the Church has always believed, is certainly much more likely to be true than what she has always rejected. The very fact that pious and intelligent men in all the Christian centuries have believed any doctrine, be it what it may, is presumptive evidence that it is a true one. If it firmly holds its place in the creed of Christendom, after all the discussions through which she has passed, after all her diligent comparison of views, and her ceaseless exertions to eliminate the last vestige of error from her creed, it must certainly be regarded as one of the strongest proofs of its soundness. The article

of Original Sin has stood this test for eighteen hundred years, and it ought now, in all reason, to be accepted by all men and especially by those who claim to be orthodox, as one of the cardinal truths of the Bible, and to be mooted no more.

VI. The comparative *practical influence* of these two theories of the origin of sin clearly shows which is scriptural. And here the appeal must be made to common observation and common fame. Which, then, according to the popular belief, produces the most thorough revivals of religion, the greatest number of conversions, and the soundest type of piety? Submitted to this test, it appears to me that no intelligent and reasonable man can doubt for a moment. Why is it that the popular impression is so strong, that the great doctrines of grace are not preached so faithfully now as they were in the days of Bellamy and Edwards, of Griffin and Payson, of Nettleton and Lyman Beecher, before he became a New School man. That there has been a great and most lamentable change in New England in the tone and effectiveness of the pulpit, ever since the rise of the New Haven controversy, is a matter of the widest notoriety, and of daily grief to thousands in the churches. The younger clergy, never

having heard the preaching or mingled in the great revivals which prevailed forty or fifty years ago, cannot have observed the change, but it is as patent to those who lived before and since the transition, as the sun in mid-heaven. It can no more be mistaken than the most self-evident truth.

How, then, is this deplorable change to be accounted for? It cannot be accounted for on any other principle, than that the great doctrines of the Reformation, of which Original Sin is the chief corner-stone, and which wrought with such wondrous power in Germany, in Scotland, and in New England for the first two hundred years of her history, have been more or less modified, or diluted, or neglected, or shorn of their power by a false philosophy. Under much of modern preaching, and that, too, which claims to be evangelical, the pastor never meets with a case, in all his experience, like that of Samuel J. Mills, who for two long years violently quarrelled with the sovereignty of God in electing some to eternal life, and who, in the unspeakable agonies of a "wounded spirit," often exclaimed, "O that I had never been born! For two years I have been sorry that God ever made me!" Many pastors would be quite startled from their propriety to find such a case

in their parishes. They would discountenance such agony as old-fashioned and unnecessary, and as not at all in harmony with the easy method by which, it is said, men can now be converted by a simple determination of their own wills. Such deep convictions of sin cannot be expected where the total and original depravity of the heart is not enforced "day and night with tears." Nor do such overwhelming convictions occur even if the preacher says that the heart is totally depraved, but not *naturally* so, — that depravity does not supervene till sometime after birth, when moral agency is supposed to commence, — that no child is a sinner till he begins to act, — and that all sin consists in his *actings* and none of it in his *nature*. This easy view of sin prepares the way for a repentance which is equally easy; and hence the sinner is often told that he can at any time repent, as easily as he can turn over his hand, or walk into another room. No man ever was or ever can be very deeply alarmed by such preaching. He will be very quiet so long he feels that the power is pretty much in his own hands, and that he is not utterly dependent on the sovereign grace of God for a new heart. And here is the vital point where the new theology fails. It fails, because sin is so represented that it creates little

alarm. It fails in the very point, which its friends conceive to be its strongest point. Paul "by the commandment" made "sin appear *exceeding sinful*." Professor Park says, "it is a disturbance of the balance of the moral sensibilities." Which of these statements is the most likely to awaken, convict, and convert? New School men profess to believe in the "lowest deep" of human depravity, but Old School men see a much "lower deep," which, if opened to the sinner's view by the preacher and the Holy Spirit, will make him shudder and cry for mercy as if he stood at the bar of judgment. New School men profess to think that their superficial view of sin is the most awakening and effective, but the results of that system prove that there was never a more egregious mistake.¹

¹ Dr. Woods, in his *Theology of the Puritans*, says that there are some men who claim to be Calvinistic who still hold, that "if sinners were free from a false philosophy, and would only put forth their power as moral agents, they might bring themselves at once to choose a life of religion, and might obtain a good hope, without such protracted and painful conflicts; and further, that if the obligations of religion, and man's ability to fulfil them, should be rightly preached, such long and distressing conviction of sin would be prevented, and multitudes be converted in a day; and finally, that if ministers would pass over the cutting doctrines of man's native depravity, election, and sovereign divine influence, and would only impress upon the minds of sinners the free salvation offered to them, and their plenary power to accept it, there would be a new era of revivals."

The frequency, the extent, and the overwhelming power of the revivals which occurred before this new theory came into vogue, compared with the unfrequent and unsatisfactory character of most of the recent awakenings in New England, in the production of which there is such a large infusion of human agency, and such a slight recognition of the sovereign agency of a Holy God, cannot, I think, but convince any candid observer which is the real theory of the Bible. This simple pregnant fact alone points out the true meaning of *φύσει* in the passage before us, and it completes our evidence that the doctrine of Original Sin is really taught there.

It is scarcely necessary to say, in conclusion, that all the various theories, which have been devised to account for the *modus* in which the sin of Adam makes its access upon his posterity, are simply the *philosophies* of men upon the subject. The Bible settles the question that Adam's sin, in some way or other, infects all his descendants. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." *How* this was done,—whether imputatively, or seminally, or corporately, or representatively, or by a Divine constitution, or by the direct act of God, or by any other mode,—the Bible does not inform us. The *fact* is a matter of divine revelation, the

mode is a matter of human conjecture. Those, who have speculated the most on the mode, know as little about it as any of us; and neither they nor we will ever be wiser upon it in the present world. Besides, it is no more difficult to explain the consistency of Original Sin with the justice of God and the freedom of man, upon the commonly received theory, than the existence of sin at all upon the recent theory. The hypothesis of Emmons, Taylor, and other New School men only removes the difficulty one step farther forward. That difficulty is the Gordian knot of theology, and their theory does not by any means untie it.





EVANGELISTS.

THE term "evangelists," in its common acceptance, is used in a very loose and indeterminate sense. Sometimes it designates a class of ministers of the gospel who assist pastors in conducting revivals of religion; at others it denotes what are called stated supplies; and then again it means missionaries, both foreign and domestic. It is highly important, as it regards correct conceptions of the nature and duties of this office, that the term be restored to its original meaning. The central idea of the Greek word *εὐαγγελιστοὶ*, translated evangelists in the New Testament, is *proclaimers of the Evangel*, or, in more familiar terms, preachers of the Gospel at large. Restricting, then, the meaning of the word to its original and true signification, it should not be used for stated supplies, for they occupy a given place, like pastors, and are not evangelists in any proper sense. They are, for the time being, pastors as well as preachers. And as it regards using the

word in the sense of missionaries, it would promote clearness of conception if that practice should also be discontinued. The word missionaries, like stated supplies, is not, indeed, a scriptural term, but it is so acceptable to the taste of the Christian public, and is so universally employed, that it has almost entirely displaced the word evangelists in all descriptions of the *pioneer* work of spreading the gospel, either at home or abroad. Besides, there is a substantial difference in the signification of these words, as they are now used. All missionaries are, indeed, evangelists, but all evangelists are not missionaries, for some of them are not employed on missionary ground, but are co-workers with pastors at home. It would, therefore, greatly promote a more scientific classification of clerical duties, and facilitate a better understanding of the whole subject, if, by common consent, the word evangelists could be used exclusively to describe the work of coöperating with pastors in promoting revivals of religion and the salvation of souls. This, we shall soon see, was originally the principal, though not exclusive employment of this order of the clergy.

It was thought necessary to submit these preliminary views of the proper work of evangelists, as it will show precisely in what sense that

term should now be used, and especially how it will be used in this article. The general subject of evangelists, in this restricted sense, will now be considered.

1. The office is *a divine institution*. The word "evangelist" occurs three times in the New Testament. It is first found in Acts xxi. 8, where Paul and his company are said to have "entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven" deacons. Here the office is incidentally mentioned, but its duties are not defined. In 2 Tim. iv. 5, Paul calls upon Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist," and "make full proof of his ministry," which clearly proves that, as he was not a settled pastor at Ephesus, he was to exercise his ministry there in the capacity of an evangelist, or itinerant preacher. Henry says that "the scope of the two Epistles to Timothy is to direct him how to discharge his office as an *evangelist* at Ephesus." But the precise nature of that office is much more clearly discriminated in the only other passage where the term occurs — Eph. iv. 11. Here we have a specific account of all the clerical offices which the Great Head of the church, on his ascension to heaven, thought it necessary to institute: "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evan-

gelists; and some, pastors and teachers." According to the best interpreters, "apostles" were those whom Christ chose, first of all, as His immediate representatives here on earth, and endowed them with the most eminent spiritual gifts, with the power of working miracles, and with that special inspiration which enabled them to write all the books of the New Testament, except the Gospels of Mark and Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles. This office, though in a sense the highest and most important of all, was, in its nature, temporary, and, having fulfilled its purpose, soon passed away. "Prophets," the office next in order, were those extraordinary teachers of Christianity who were endowed with the gift of prophecy, or the ability to foretell future events, as well as of preaching the truth. The duties of prophets, or that which particularly distinguished them, namely, the ability to foretell future events, having been fully discharged, and the object of their appointment being accomplished, that office also ceased.

The office next in order, and, as some expositors think, the next in importance, was that of "evangelists." Professor Hackett, in his Notes on the Acts, says, "The title of evangelists appears to have been given to those who had no stated pastoral charge, but travelled from place

to place as they had opportunity." Barnes says, "The office was distinct from that of the pastor, the teacher, and the prophet, and was manifestly an office in which *preaching* was the main thing." Olshausen held that "evangelists are such teachers as, journeying about, labored for the wider extension of the gospel." Kuinoel affirms that "evangelists in the age of the apostles were not settled pastors of any Christian congregation, or resident at any stated place, but were itinerant presbyters." Bengel, in his *Gnomon* of the New Testament, says, "The evangelist was fitted for an office of the highest importance, by a gift superior to that of pastors and teachers." Dr. Scott says, "The office of evangelist, in primitive times, was in most respects similar to that of missionaries in subsequent times. They were preachers of the gospel, without full apostolical authority, and without any stated charge; going among the heathen to found churches, or, visiting churches already formed, to 'set in order the things that were wanting,' to supply the deficiencies or aid the labors of the stated pastors, and to stimulate them to greater earnestness in discharging their duties. When zeal for propagating the gospel subsided, this office fell into disuse; but in one form or other the office of evangelist, or something of the same nature,

must revive along with the work of evangelizing the nations." And Dr. Scott even went so far as to say that evangelists were "superior in dignity to diocesan bishops." This is a most remarkable concession for an Episcopalian, inasmuch as the clergy of that church have always been especially jealous of any encroachment upon the prerogatives of "mitred heads." According, then, to his liberal averment, it was one of the main offices of evangelists to "supply the deficiencies" of pastors, to "aid their labors," and to "stimulate them to greater earnestness in discharging their duties." If all pastors were as prompt and as cordial in conceding to evangelists their proper vocation, these coördinate ministries appointed by Christ for the salvation of men would work together with far greater harmony and success, and a new impulse would be given to His kingdom in every land.

According to the principal authorities already cited, it appears that, in primitive times, evangelists labored at home in connection with the apostles more than as missionaries in foreign countries. Among the earliest evangelists were such men as Timothy and Titus, Silvanus and Apollos. Timothy labored in Ephesus and Titus in Crete, where the apostles had already preached the gospel and planted churches. Sil-

vanus and Apollos, so far as we know their history, did the same. The apostles were the pioneers in the work, and the evangelists followed and built on their foundations. This gives us the true conception of the principal employment of evangelists in the earliest age of the church. There is not anything, then, in the nature and design of this office, which shows that it was to be temporary, but rather that it is to be as permanent as any other in the Christian church. As evangelists are, *a fortiori*, preachers of the gospel, it cannot be proved that this office has passed away, as some have supposed, until it can be shown that the necessity for *preaching the gospel* has passed away.

The other office, appointed by the Saviour at his ascension, is that of "pastors and teachers." These appear to be one and the same, as there is no disjunctive particle placed between them in the statement, as there is between all the other offices mentioned. "A distinction between pastors and teachers," says the learned and venerable Dr. Jenks, "was early attempted by the New England churches, but was not long maintained."¹ As the churches will always *need* "pastors and teachers," there is every reason to believe that that office is also permanent.

¹ Comp. Com. *in loc.* Eph. iv. 11. Cambridge Platform.

From this analysis of the various offices in the Christian ministry which were appointed by its Divine Founder, it is evident that the office of evangelists, if not superior, is, at any rate, in no sense inferior, to that of pastors. The etymology of the terms teaches that the evangelist is rather the *preacher*, and the pastor the *shepherd*. The difference is one of *gifts* not of *grade*, of *duties* not of *rank*. A true construction would probably place them on a level in point of importance; and as they are clearly coördinate offices, their incumbents should work together, with the utmost harmony, in executing the great commission with which they are charged.

II. Can we discover any of *the reasons which existed in the Divine Mind* for the institution of this permanent office in the ministry? The inquiry is not irreverent. Science is doing the same thing every day, and is thereby adding confirmation to the statements of the Bible. These reasons must lie in *the nature of the work to be done by evangelists, and in human nature itself*. Let us look somewhat deeply into the matter. A close observation will discover that all the agencies which God has established for the salvation of men, are grounded in *the necessities of the case*. Pastors are men of "like passions" with other men, and though presumed to be

better than the average of Christians, they are by no means exempt from human frailties and infirmities. Such, too, are the laws of human action, that pastors, in the progress of life, usually acquire some fixed habit of performing their official duties which may not be the most favorable to their success. Indeed, it has come to be a very prevalent opinion, that most pastors — such is human infirmity — can count a much larger number of real converts in their earlier than in their later ministry. The reverse of this would probably be expected by a superficial observer. Without a thorough examination of the subject, it might be supposed, that an increase of years, which usually brings with it an increase of wisdom, would also bring an increase of success; and that such an enlarged knowledge of divine truth and of the human heart would certainly result in a great increase of conversions to Christ. But the facts in the case, as the history of our churches attests, are quite otherwise. Strange as it may seem, the immaturity and zeal of youth are generally more successful than the wisdom and moderation of old age. There are, indeed, some pastors of such versatility of talent and such knowledge of the public taste, that they “keep up with the times,” and are always young and modern in their style of preaching,

and in all their habits. Through a pastorate of half a century, they maintain the fire of youth in the maturity of age. But such cases are comparatively rare. The habits of most pastors, like those of other men, become inveterate with the lapse of time. They come to have, almost inevitably but not necessarily, a certain stereotyped manner of praying, and reading, and preaching, and visiting, and performing all other clerical duties; and this *routine* partially forecloses success. The congregation take on the monotony of the pastor, and long years often pass away without revivals of religion, or the conversion of many souls to Christ. A barrister, with this soporific sameness of manner, would be briefless, and such a statesman could not command "the applause of listening senates," nor carry any great measure of public utility.

In this state of things is it not morally certain, that incalculable good would result from the labors of a judicious evangelist, if he could be introduced by the hearty invitation, and enjoy the cordial coöperation of the pastor and the church? With a deep conviction of his dependence on God for success, and without any undue excitement, he might and probably would break up, for the time at least, these formal hab-

its of the pastor and the people, arrest the public attention, alarm the general conscience, and move scores and hundreds anxiously to ask, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The pastor would be made a more effective preacher, the religious state of the church would be greatly improved, its numbers largely increased, and angels send up new hosannas that souls are saved, when there was a fearful probability that they would be lost.

But there is another aspect of the subject which deserves serious consideration. Much is said nowadays upon the duty of laymen to be more active in the cause of Christ. There is, no doubt, a very large amount of lay influence that is quite inert and ineffective in this cause. The evil is great, and should be immediately removed. But while we concur most heartily in all these appeals to laymen to "come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty," and join our humble voice in invoking their supreme consecration to this work, we cannot forget that there are two sides to the subject. If we mistake not, there is, perhaps, as large a proportion of pastors to whom a similar appeal might, with equal propriety, be addressed. If the lay element in the churches, as it is termed, needs to be summoned to more active duty, so does the

clerical. Indeed, we hardly know which is the most delinquent in this matter, or which has a right to cast the first stone.

But abstaining from all invidious comparisons, we believe it to be a truth, — and our cheeks mantle with shame while we write it, — that there are pastors who are more interested in politics, or war, or slavery, or education, or some other side issue, than in the direct business of the ministry — the rescuing of their hearers from “everlasting burnings.” Some,

“ So warm on meaner themes,
Are cold on this.”

The difference is visible in their prayers, in their preaching, and in their ordinary spirit out of the pulpit, and it is a matter of frequent conversation and of profound solicitude among many of the best members of the churches. However great may be the deficiencies of laymen, there are some, we believe, who are far more zealous than their pastors for the salvation of sinners. If laymen, then, need to be *put up* to greater activity, there are some pastors who need it quite as much.

Constitutional temperament, also, has great influence here. Some pastors are more phlegmatic than mercurial, apathetic than active, intellectual than emotional, philosophical than

practical, formal than spiritual, Some, too, were not "born again" in revivals, and, almost of course, they are comparatively unacquainted with revivals, feel apparently but little interest in revivals, and do not seem to know how to work for or in revivals. It is also worthy of particular notice that those pastors who have these constitutional or moral imperfections, and who therefore specially *need* the aid of evangelists to supplement and give effect to their own labors, are usually the very men, of all others, who are the most unwilling that they should come into their parishes. What, then, are the prospects of their congregations without some foreign aid, which better understands and is better adapted to the work of calling sinners to repentance? Must thousands perish without such help? Can the churches afford to do without it? Can such pastors do without it? If each of the fourteen hundred Congregational pastors in New England should daily feel that intense solicitude for the salvation of his parishioners which made the godly Rutherford exclaim at midnight, —

"O, if one soul from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My heaven will be *two* heavens
In Immanuel's land," —

there would be little objection to evangelists. And if they all should, like Paul at Ephesus, "by the space of three years cease not to warn every one night and day with tears," there would perhaps be less necessity, but an earnest *demand* for this kind of help. The annual returns made to the General Associations and Conferences of New England show that the rate of increase in the membership of our churches is alarmingly small, and some of them show the still more astounding fact that the rate is one of decrease. Ought not these facts to startle the pastors and churches from their slumbers, and incite them to new activity, to more earnest prayer, and to the immediate adoption of every authorized agency for the salvation of the people?

Now, is not the wisdom of the Great Head of the church not only discernible but most conspicuous, in the appointment of such an order of men to impart a new impulse and give fresh success to the labors of the local ministry? and is not the necessity of evangelists based in the very infirmities of human nature itself? If this be so, the institution of this office was by no means a superfluous arrangement which might just as well have been dispensed with, but an imperative necessity to the best interests of Zion. The work which Timothy performed at Eph-

esus, and Titus in Crete, needs to be performed everywhere. If the apostles needed the aid of evangelists, do not pastors need it as much ?

It is also worthy of special notice that they are eminently adapted to the genius of our institutions. In no country have they been more successful. Several have arisen in New England and in the Middle and Western States, who, by their thorough knowlege of men, their fervid zeal, and their earnest enforcement of the truth, have roused many a congregation which the pastor could not move, and met the case of many a procrastinating sinner whom the pastor could not bring to the great decision. And several others, of less judgment and discretion, after making all due allowance for their imperfections, it must be conceded, have instrumentally saved not a few from the horrors of the "second death." It seems, therefore, to be the ordination of Providence, grounded in the necessities of the case, that this class of ministers shall be an indispensable agency in achieving some of the most signal victories of the cross.

III. Why, then, has this office *fallen into such comparative neglect, and what can be done to restore it to its primitive usefulness?*

Want of clear conceptions of its *Divine ap-*

pointment is one reason why it has been undervalued. The early settlers of New England, barely escaping with their lives from the persecutions of the hierarchy of the Episcopal church in the fatherland, carried out their views of ministerial parity to such an extent as practically to exclude evangelists from the clerical category. They determined to have pastors, and learned and able pastors too, but they would have pastors only. This extreme simplification of Congregationalism crowded out the office from anything like a general recognition by the churches. Of necessity, under such an exclusive regimen, it fell into much disuse.

Another cause is, that *no provision has been made for the education and support* of this class of men. Colleges were early founded to educate pastors, and something like adequate support is insured them after they have entered upon their work. Missionaries, too, both home and foreign, are educated with very considerable reference to their respective fields of labor. Corresponding arrangements should be made for the equipment and sustenance of evangelists. It is contrary to the Scriptures and to common sense for men to go to warfare at their own charges. Evangelists need as thorough preparation for their difficult calling as any other public

men, and they should have an equally substantial support in active life and amid the infirmities of advanced age. A class of ministers, whose professional training has been so entirely neglected, and who are so destitute of any permanent pecuniary support, cannot be expected to be highly influential.¹

Still another cause may be found in the *imprudence* of some who have claimed to exercise that office. Not every man who is distinguished for piety, or zeal, or eloquence, is therefore qualified to be an evangelist. Much less are they qualified who *can find nothing else to do*. The office is one of a very peculiar character, and the successful incumbent of it must have very peculiar qualifications. No calling is more delicate and difficult. An evangelist, who would enjoy the greatest success, must have sterling common sense and a profound knowledge of human nature. He must be prudent, if possible, beyond any other servant of the churches. He must have an ardent love of revivals of religion; an all-consuming anxiety for the immediate conversion of men; an intuitive perception of the subtlest workings of the heart in times of the

¹ This evil, it is hoped, will now be in some measure removed by the American Revival Association, formed in Boston for the purpose, in part, of meeting this great public necessity.

deepest religious interest; a disgust with all tactics, and machinery, and eccentricities, and a firm reliance upon divine truth and the Holy Spirit for producing immediate results; that genial temper which will work kindly and fraternally with pastors, and leave them more firmly seated in the affections of their flocks; and, finally, that spirit of self-renunciation which will lay him in the dust and keep him there, while he looks up to Heaven alone for success. Not a few of these obvious qualifications have been wanting in some who have claimed to fill that office, and this has done much to discredit the vocation with the Christian public.

This introduces another reason why it has fallen into partial neglect, — *some pastors have discountenanced it.* Great infelicities in the style of preaching of some so-called evangelists, and in their mode of conducting religious meetings, have done not a little to injure the usefulness of the class. It cannot be doubted that many of their sermons have conveyed but the merest modicum of truth, and that they have depended more on strange expedients and startling novel-ties to produce impression. They seem to believe — and some pastors have the same conviction — that it will not do to preach the doctrines of the Bible in revivals of religion; that it will

discourage the awakened, and prevent them from becoming Christians in the modern, easy way. But there never was a more fatal mistake, whether it is made by pastor or evangelist. Leviathan is not so tamed. Old Adam will be found to be too hard for such young Melancthons. The great truths of the Bible, such as the total native depravity of every human heart; the necessity of regeneration by the special influences of the Holy Spirit; the utter indisposition of every sinner to accept of Christ till he is "made willing" in the day of God's power; his inflexible persistence in rebellion up to the very last moment before the Spirit changes his heart; the vicarious atonement of Christ for the sins of the world; the unconditional election in the ages of eternity of every one who becomes a Christian; the ability and duty of every sinner immediately to repent of sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; justification by faith in His blood, and not by any works of our own; the unspeakable importance of good morals as an evidence, and their unspeakable worthlessness as the ground of pardon; the perfect justice of God in the endless destruction of the impenitent,—these great truths, and those of a cognate character, are the very "sword of the Spirit." Those who wield this "sword" with

the greatest dexterity and power will be the most successful.

It is not necessary here to enter into the question how large or how small an amount of truth is necessary to conversion. All that the occasion requires to be said is, that though conversions may sometimes take place where there is but very little light, yet, as a general fact, converts will be much more numerous, their religious experience much more satisfactory, and their subsequent piety far more intelligent, symmetrical, and useful, when the leading truths of the Bible, in their solemn and comprehensive relations, have been the most clearly presented to their minds, and enforced the most powerfully upon their hearts in revivals. Some, who have called themselves evangelists, have abstained from a thorough enforcement of these doctrines, and have depended more on their own ingenuity for results; and pastors, as well as others, have deplored their influence upon the cause of Zion. But it is the *abuse*, and not the proper administration of the office that is to be deplored; and every one should be just — not to say magnanimous — enough to make this obvious discrimination. The pastoral office, too, has often been egregiously perverted, but it has not therefore been thrown aside; and

Christ demands that the office of evangelist be treated with the same consideration and equity.

But even where evangelists preach the truth and discharge all their duties with an average degree of propriety, it can hardly be expected that it will be done in precisely the *way and manner* of the pastors themselves. Idiosyncrasies are not easily overcome, and pastors should make due allowance here. Even the apostle John was unwilling that devils should be cast out, unless it was done according to his views of propriety. But Christ rebuked his narrow conceptions, and said, "Forbid it not, for he that is not against us is for us." A pastor once prayed that God would revive his work among his people, but that he would *do it in a regular way*; as if he was apprehensive that the Holy Spirit might fall into some irregularities. Now, while all irregularities on our part are to be studiously avoided, it is still true that the Holy Ghost often blesses efforts which appear to us quite inappropriate. We ought not, then to "limit the Holy One of Israel," but offer up the more reverent petition, "'Send by whom thou wilt send,' so that thy work is revived and sinners saved."

It cannot be disguised that some pastors are disposed to depreciate the labors of evangelists.

Their success has been called in question, and it has been even gravely estimated that some of them ruin more souls than they save. But how can this be shown? The facts are clearly beyond the scope of arithmetical computation. The data are quite insufficient to sustain the conclusion.

A lesson of caution may be learned from the treatment which Whitefield received from some of the pastors and churches in this country. Their opposition to that excellent man arose rather from their lukewarmness than from any indiscretions on his part. It is an historical fact, which looks very much like a judicial dispensation, that from the date of their opposition many of them seem to have been abandoned by the Holy Spirit; and, as a consequence, they went down the steep declivity of error from indifference to Arminianism, and from Arminianism to the cold and abysmal depths of Unitarianism, from which they never recovered.

The history of our churches clearly demonstrates the necessity and usefulness of evangelists. Enlightened candor cannot doubt that they have, in general, been eminently blessed by the Holy Spirit, and therefore we may expect that such men will continue to be in all future time. Some of them have already "fin-

ished their course," and having "turned many to righteousness," they are now brilliant gems, glittering with celestial lustre in the coronet of the Redeemer. Hence, that extreme conservatism which would exclude them from the field, if allowed its way, will shut multitudes from the kingdom of God.

Let, then, this want of harmony between pastors and evangelists no longer continue to be a scandal in the churches. Let their relations to each other and to Zion be readjusted upon the principles of the New Testament. If evangelists are imperfect men, so are pastors. Let pastors, then, extend to their associates in the sacred office the same indulgence which they ask for their own short-comings. The office of evangelists is one which Christ himself has appointed. "Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it."

In view of all the facts in the case, the public mind should settle down into the firm conviction, that there is no incompatibility between these two offices in the Christian ministry. They are parts of the same great system of means which has been divinely ordained for the salvation of the world, and both are worthy of all honor. Their spheres of duty are somewhat different, but they are coetaneous in their origin, coequal in their rights, and their incumbents

should warmly coöperate in the prosecution of their common work. As there is no difference between them in grade, but only in gifts, neither can lord it over the other. Ephraim should not envy Judah, and Judah should not vex Ephraim. It is no reproach to pastors that evangelists can sometimes be more successful than themselves in commencing and conducting revivals of religion; and it is no reproach to evangelists, that, after the flock has been gathered into the fold, pastors can better feed it with knowledge and understanding. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." When any extra work needs to be done *for* the revival or *in* a revival of religion, pastors should rejoice to be able to avail themselves of the assistance of judicious evangelists as "fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God;" and evangelists should treat pastors with such good faith as to carry away their grateful benedictions as a part of their own reward.

The tenacity with which the office of evangelists has held on upon the confidence of the churches, through all the Christian ages and through no inconsiderable neglect, conclusively proves that it is an agency for good which they will never dispense with. *Luther* and many of the Reformers served the churches more as evan-

gelists than as pastors. The trumpet-tongue of *Peter Gabriel* startled the people of the Netherlands, and called listening thousands to repentance. *Christmas Evans*, in Wales, turned hundreds more to righteousness as an evangelist than he did as a pastor. The *Tennents* in this country were pastors, but they are better known by their evangelistic labors. *Whitefield*, burning with seraphic fervor for the salvation of men, crossed the Atlantic Ocean thirteen times, roused the churches of both hemispheres from their slumbers, launched the thunderbolts of truth into the consciences of the ungodly, and called multitudes into the kingdom of Christ, who are now rehearsing, in the language of heaven, their obligations to that eminent evangelist. When he preached on Boston Common, twenty thousand persons hung upon his lips, with breathless anxiety to learn what they must do to be saved. *Brainerd*, struggling all his life with feeble health, and dying at the early age of thirty, by his uncommon piety and fervid zeal preached the gospel with such overwhelming power, that the "untutored Indian" dropped his tomahawk, and cried, "Gutummakaulumeh," "Gutummakaulumeh" — "Have mercy upon me," "Have mercy upon me;" hundreds of red and white men were converted, and the churches raised to

a far higher plane of holy living. *Edwards*, with a world-wide reputation as a pastor and theologian, when occasion offered, loved to "do the work of an evangelist." At Enfield, Connecticut, on one of his preaching tours, he delivered his celebrated sermon on *Sinners falling into the hands of an angry God*. With scarcely a single gesture, but with inexorable logic, impassioned earnestness and unsparing application of the truth, he drew such a vivid picture of the guilt of every sinner and of his danger of instant perdition, that the congregation started to their feet and seized hold of the balusters of the pews to save themselves from sinking into hell. *Summerfield*, a man of accomplished manners, consecrated spirit and persuasive eloquence, in his brief and brilliant career, went through the churches in Great Britain and this country like an angel of light, contributed largely to the triumphs of the Redeemer, and left behind him a name perfumed with the very fragrance of heaven. *Nettleton*, with a solemnity the most impressive and a dichotomizing ability the most searching, laid open the sinner's heart to his own astonished view, and pursued him, with persistent earnestness, through all his windings and excuses till he surrendered at the feet of Jesus. Connecticut, New York and Massachu-

setts will long have occasion for thankfulness that they were blessed with the labors of that successful evangelist. And if the heavens shall again open over us, and "the skies pour down righteousness," pastors will find their hands more than full; other evangelists will be called into the field, and the mantles of these ascended Elijahs will fall upon some youthful Elishas.

Revivals of religion are the hope of the world. The theory that the world can be saved by occasional conversions and gradual additions to the churches, is little better than an apology for religious — or rather irreligious — indifference. The population of the globe is now estimated at *one thousand millions*. In what year of our Lord will they all be converted at that rate of proceeding? Arithmetic cannot tell; prophecy does not tell. Indeed it cannot be told, for the plan involves a sheer impossibility. That gradual theory, then, must be universally exploded. Revivals of far more than Pentecostal power are indispensable, and must be expected and sought for with an ardent faith by all the "sacramental host." Apostolic zeal must reanimate the entire ministry, and the churches must everywhere be baptized with the Spirit from on high. Then the office of evangelists will be restored

to its proper place among the great instrumentalities for the conversion of the world. The watchmen will see eye to eye, and the Lord bring again Zion. Their perfect union will herald the morning of the Millennium.





THE HOLY TRINITY.

THE existence and the unity of God can be inferred from the light of nature, but the Trinity of Persons in that Unity is a matter of written revelation alone. The Scriptures reveal the *fact*, that the One God exists in Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; but they do not propose that fact for comprehension by our reason, but for acceptance by our faith. This peculiar mode of the Divine existence is, indeed, profoundly mysterious, but its mystery only confirms its truth. That which is Infinite can never be brought within the measure of finite minds. The inconceivableness of the Trinity in Unity is, however, no greater than of the Oneness itself, or of any of its attributes. Sir William Hamilton, probably the ablest metaphysician of the age, has demonstrated, that there are many things which are inconceivable by us, which nevertheless must be true. The *conceivable* is not the limit of the *true*. The Trinity, then, may be a *fact*, though

it be inconceivable; and we are left to accept or reject it, according as it is revealed or not revealed in the Bible.

It has long been a favorite, and, as some have thought, a decisive objection to the Tri-Unity of Persons in the Godhead, that it cannot be understood by the human reason. But Professor Mansel, no mean authority, says:—"Let Religion begin where it will, it must begin with that which is above Reason. We may seek for a Religion within the limits of the bare Reason, and we shall not find it, simply because no such thing exists." And again;—"The objection, 'How can the One be many, or the Many one?' is so far from telling with peculiar force against the catholic doctrine of the Holy Trinity, that it has precisely the same power or want of power, against *any* conception in which we may attempt to represent the Divine Nature and Attributes, or indeed to represent the Infinite at all."¹ Robert Anchor Thompson says:—"In what sense the Divine Persons are Three, and in what sense they are One, are mysteries of the Infinite beyond our knowledge. The Internal Nature of the Deity, the relations of the Divine Persons, cannot but be incomprehensible. But though unknown in their Eternity, the Persons of the

¹ *Bampton Lectures*, VI., pp. 165-169 and 170.

Godhead become known in their relations to mankind; and their co-eternal Deity is the foundation of revealed religion.”¹ Daniel Webster, in his Confession of Faith, says:—“I believe that God exists in Three Persons; nor is it any objection to this belief, that I cannot comprehend how *One* can be *Three*, or *Three One*. I hold it my duty to believe, *not what I can comprehend or account for, but what my Maker teaches me.*” What may be the precise adjustment of the Persons in the transcendent depths of the Divine Existence, we do not know; but in His theophany or revelation of Himself to us, a Threefold Distinction (usually called Persons for want of a better term) is disclosed, and is a matter of intelligent belief.

Having disposed of this philosophical objection to the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, let us proceed to a consideration of the *proofs* of the doctrine itself. Though our primary dependence for the proof of this great article of the Christian faith must be upon the Scriptures themselves, there is a large amount of *corroborative* evidence, which, taken by itself alone, would form the strongest presumption if not demonstration of its truth. Our limits necessarily preclude anything like an exhaustive statement of

¹ *Christian Theism*, p. 335.

the grounds, Scriptural and extra Scriptural, on which the doctrine of the Divine Trinity immovably stands. The most that can now be attempted is a rapid and discursive view of the general evidence in the case,—the details of which are altogether too multitudinous for our present use. Our argument will embrace the *biblical*, the *historical*, the *providential*, and the *practical* proofs of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

I. The *Biblical* evidence.

Here it is necessary to premise, once for all, that the Personality of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, is asserted as against Pantheism, and His Unity as against Polytheism, and not as against a Trinity of Persons. The only question then remaining is, whether He exists in One Person only, or in Three Persons. Nobody believes in a Duality of Persons,—it is One, or it is Three. All those texts of Scripture, then, which speak of Two Persons only, necessarily carry with them or imply the Third. If there are more than One, there are Three. Holding fast, then, the strict Unity of God as to His essence, let us examine some of the Scriptural proofs that He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, each with a common consciousness, coöperating, interpenetrating, and interacting,—

ineffably by human language, inconceivably by finite reason, —

One inexplicably Three,
One in simplest Unity.

1. Some of the passages which imply or assert *two or three of the Persons* in the Godhead *conjointly*. Scattered indices are found throughout the Old Testament, that the mode of the Divine Existence is altogether peculiar, — faintly yet significantly foreshadowing the fuller revelation of that mode in the New. And we might perhaps expect beforehand, that a doctrine of such peculiarity and importance would be very early intimated to our race; accordingly we find that it was so done in the very first chapter and verse of the Bible.

The Hebrew word ELOHIM, translated *God* in the Old Testament, is a *plural noun*, and thus we have some indication of the Trinity in the Divine Name itself. The construction of that noun with other nouns, and with verbs and pronouns, sometimes in the singular and sometimes in the plural number, is a remarkable grammatical anomaly, which can be accounted for only on the supposition that a plurality of Persons in the Divine Unity is intended to be set forth; and thus the very syntax of the language intimates the fact that more Persons than one exist

in the Unsearchable God. This plurality of Persons is perhaps still more distinctly shadowed forth in the colloquy which Jehovah held with Himself upon the creation of man, and on other occasions, in the use of the plural pronouns:—
 “Let *us* make man, in *our* image, after *our* likeness.” “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become as one of *us*, to know good and evil.” “And the Lord said, Go to, let *us* go down, and there confound their language.”

These expressions admit of no consistent explanation, except upon the hypothesis that there is more than One Person in the One God. It is worthy of special notice in this connection that, while Elohim, the Hebrew name of God, is plural, and plural pronouns are so freely used in the consultations of Jehovah with Himself, yet, to guard against conveying the idea of tritheism or polytheism, and to keep up the doctrine of the strictest Unity of God,—the style of *unity* is immediately resumed; as where God said, “Let *us* make man,” it is instantly added, “So God created man in *His* image;”—using the *singular* pronoun to designate and preserve the Oneness of the Deity.¹ These very peculiar

¹ “To that said in the plural, ‘Let us make man,’ is yet subjoined in the singular, ‘And God made man;’ and to that said in the plural, ‘After our likeness,’ is subjoined in the singular, ‘After the image of God.’—*Confessions of Augustine*, (Andover ed.) p. 398.

syntactical constructions pervade the Old Testament. Now to suppose that they are the result of carelessness, would be an impeachment of the inspiration of the writers; but to suppose them a matter of *intention*, is an admission of a plurality of Persons.

“Seek ye out the book of the Lord, and read; for *my* mouth it hath commanded, and *His Spirit* it hath gathered them.” Here the Trinity of Persons is again very distinctly intimated. “And now the *Lord God* and *His Spirit* hath sent *Me*.” In this passage the Three Persons are discriminated with unmistakable clearness.

Passing on to the New Testament, we find the Three Persons revealed with great formality and precision.

“Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*.” This is the Apostolic Commission. The moment of the Ascension has now arrived, and these are among the last words of the Redeemer. Parting words are always the weightiest. The very substance of the Evangel to be proclaimed to the “nations,” was now to be condensed into one comprehensive and most explicit epitome. Now, if ever, — while the Old economy is to cease,

and the New one to begin; now, while the wondering disciples are entranced with the significant preparations for His departure, while the heavens are parting over his head, and the wide world is impatient to be discipled, — now, if ever, will the Master announce the *central doctrine* of His religion. We listen with bated breath to learn what it is. “Go, teach the nations, and baptize them,” not in the general name of God, but in His new Name, His Triune Name, the Name by which He is hereafter to be known, — “the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

The Rev. Dr. Huntington, lately Preacher to the University at Cambridge, and a recent convert from Unitarianism, says of these parting words of the Redeemer: “Our faith is here summoned to the Three Persons of the One God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. No hint is given that there is any difference of nature, dignity, duration, power, or glory between them. There is nothing in the situation, the relations, or the contents of the Divine formula to suggest that either of the Three is less than the others, or less than God. The obvious, unforced, natural interpretation is, that the Three are Persons, and that the Persons are Three.”¹

¹ *Christian Believing and Living*, p. 356.

With every believer in the divine authority of the Scriptures we might here pause, and close our argument in proof of the Tri-personality of the Godhead. Christ himself has settled the point, under circumstances which called for the exactest statement of the fact. He has done it with even arithmetical precision. The proof, however, is wondrously cumulative.

“The grace of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghost*, be with you all.”

In this apostolic benediction the precedence is given to the *Son* ; — doubtless with the intent of showing that the Three Persons are “equal in power and glory,” and that the precedence of either before the others is merely conventional or official, and not indicative of any difference in their essence, or in the interior and permanent basis of their being.

Before we dismiss the topic of the Three Persons in their conjoint character, it is worthy of special remark that the full revelation of God, as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, was reserved till Christ’s incarnation, — when it became necessary that the Three should be specified in their distinct severalty, and in their correlate relations. When that necessity occurred, the *absolute truth*, which before had

been but partially disclosed, blazed out in characters of living light upon the pages of the New Testament.

2. Some of the additional Scripture proofs of the *Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ*.

As none except atheists and pantheists disbelieve the real divinity of the Father Almighty, we pass to consider that of the Son.

Christ is called *God* fifteen times, and the *Lord* seventy-seven times. The Father calls Him God: "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O *God*, is forever and ever." "His Son Jesus Christ. This is the *true God*." "And they shall call his name *Emmanuel*, which being interpreted is, *God with us*." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the *Word was God*." "Great is the mystery of godliness; *God* was manifest in the flesh." "Christ, who is over all, *God* blessed forever." "And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, *The Mighty God*."

Self-Existence and *Eternity* are ascribed to Christ: "*In the beginning* was the *Word*." "He is *before* all things." "*Before* Abraham was, I am." "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

Omnipotence is another of His attributes, and the *creation of all things* is ascribed to Him:

"All things were *made* by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."
"For by Him were all things *created* that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

Christ wrought *Miracles in His own name and strength*. He healed all manner of diseases, cast out devils, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, made the lame walk, and the dumb speak, fed thousands of people with a few loaves and fishes, raised the dead, and even had the power to "lay down his own life, and power to take it again." Unlike all other workers of miracles, he claimed to overrule and set aside the laws of nature by his own inherent, underived, undelegated power; and the Father never disputed but expressly conceded that claim.

Christ was *Omniscient*. He said to the Church in Thyatira: "And all the churches shall know that *I am He who searcheth the reins and the hearts*." He "needed not that any should testify of man, for *He knew what was in man*."
"Simon, son of Jonas, loveth thou me? Yea, Lord, thou *knowest all things*, thou knowest that I love thee." How often did He overwhelm

the Pharisees, and how did He astonish His disciples and the woman of Samaria, by disclosing the fact, that He read their very thoughts and was perfectly acquainted with their histories. His Omniscience qualifies Him to be the *Judge* of the world. "Before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats." "He shall give to every man according to his works." "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all Judgment unto the Son;" and for this declared reason, "that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father;" and then, as if to annihilate the hopes of all who think to honor the Father while rejecting the equality of His Son, it is added, with the closest personal application to such men, "He that honoreth not the Son, *honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him.*"

Omnipresence is ascribed to Christ. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." No matter where they are "gathered together," — whether in one zone or another, whether on continent or ocean, whether in either hemisphere, Christ is "in the midst of them." This Greek idiom teaches His universal presence. When He invested His disciples with the commission

to "preach the Gospel to every creature," He encouraged them with the assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This broad declaration has neither sense nor pertinence, except on the supposition that He is everywhere present.

Divine Worship is offered to Christ.

Peter refused the worship of Cornelius, Paul and Barnabas that of the Lystrans, and John that of an angel, but Christ never declined the religious homage of men or angels. Thomas worshipped Him, when he found to his surprise that He had indeed risen from the dead, and exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" When, at the ascension, "a cloud received Him out of their sight," all the disciples "*worshipped* Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Stephen, the proto-martyr, worshipped Him with his dying breath, and when the very visions of God were so wondrously opened to him that he could not be mistaken as to His Divine character: "And they stoned Stephen, *calling upon God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus, when Christ so "revealed" Himself to that persecutor's soul that it prostrated him to the earth, — "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, *calling on the name of the Lord.*" The early disciples were

so much in the habit of praying directly to Christ, that they were familiarly known and designated, as those who "called upon His name." Twenty times, in the New Testament, "grace, mercy, and peace" are implored of *God the Son*, equally with God the Father. Besides, God the Father requires all "the thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" in heaven to worship the Son: "When He bringeth in the First Begotten into the world, He saith, 'And let *all the angels of God worship Him.*'" And they all delight to do so; for, says the apocalyptic apostle, "I heard the voice of many angels round the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the *Lamb* that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing! And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, even all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the *Lamb* forever and ever! And the four living creatures said, Amen."

We have now cited but a small part of the Scripture testimony to the Supreme Divinity of

the Son of God. The Greek language — a language of the most affluent copiousness — is laid under contribution for its most exalted phrases to describe the character of the Saviour. It can invoke no higher terms to set forth the nature of the Father. The Father and the Son, then, are coequal.

3. Passing over the mass of evidence that the nature of the Son is *complex*, — embracing both the *Divine in its Absoluteness* and the *Human in its Perfectness*, that He is both the “very God” and a real man, — we will close the Scriptural proof of the Trinity with a brief view of the evidence for the *Personality and Divinity of the Holy Ghost*.

As to His *Personality*, — in opposition to the Unitarian view that He is a mere attribute or *afflatus* of the Father, — we might cite again the baptismal formula and the apostolic benedictions, as placing that point beyond all reasonable doubt. *Personal* existence is there as clearly ascribed to Him, as to either the Father or the Son. The multiplied cases of the use of the personal pronouns also prove His Personality. “*He* shall teach you all things.” “*He* shall testify of Me.” “I will send *Him* unto you.” “And when *He* is come.” “When *He*, the Spirit of truth, is come, *He* will guide you into

all truth." "*He* shall not speak of *Himself*." "*He* shall glorify me." "The Holy Ghost said, Separate *Me* Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have called them." It is not possible for language to convey the idea of *personality* more explicitly.

There are also many texts which ascribe to the Holy Spirit the personal *acts* of *coming, testifying, receiving, showing, teaching, bearing, speaking, commanding, forbidding, reproving, approving*, etc. All these are the acts of a several, conscious, intelligent *being*, and not of a mere impersonal, dependent *influence*.

As to His *Divinity*, all those passages heretofore cited where *He* is coupled with the Father and the Son, are decisive proofs. Besides, *He* is called *God*. Satan filled the heart of Ananias "to lie to the Holy Ghost," but it is immediately subjoined, as if for the special purpose of placing His Deity beyond all dispute, — "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto *God*." Christians are described by the convertible phrases, the "temple of *God*" and the "temple of the *Holy Ghost*." He is *Omniscient*. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counsellor, hath taught Him?" "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, *the deep things of God*." He is *Omnipresent*. "Whither shall I go from

thy *Spirit*? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" He is *Eternal*, for He is expressly called the *eternal Spirit*." He *inspired the prophets* to predict future events;—"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the *Holy Ghost*." He *inspired the writers of the Bible* so as to give them a knowledge of facts which they did not already possess, and to preserve them from all possible error in their statements,— "all Scripture was given by inspiration of God." He *convicts men of sin*:—"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." He *converts men*:—"Except a man be born of water and of the *Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the *Spirit* is Spirit." The wonderful scenes of the day of Pentecost, Peter expressly affirms were the work of the *Holy Ghost*,—"He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."

This various evidence leaves no reasonable doubt of the real *Personality and Deity* of the *Third Person* in the adorable Trinity; and the amount, the explicitness, the directness of the proof now produced from the Scriptures of the *Tri-Unity of Persons in the Godhead*, are, in our judgment, incontestably conclusive. "It is,"

says Paley, "an immense conclusion that there is a God;" and the "conclusion" that He exists in *Three Persons*, where we consider the necessary and far-reaching effects of that Tri-Personality upon the salvation of men, is perhaps equally "immense."

II. The *Historical* evidence.

It is a well known fact that most of the systems of pagan mythology have their *triads* or *trinities*,—a feature which we cannot conceive could have existed at all, and much less that it could have so widely obtained among the nations of antiquity, if they had not borrowed the idea from the Jewish Scriptures. This fact is therefore strong corroborative evidence that the doctrine of the Trinity is taught in the Old Testament. Besides, this doctrine has been believed in all the ages of the Christian Church, and it is therefore strongly accredited by the analogy of faith. The word Trinity is not, indeed, applied to this doctrine in the Bible; but, as Dr. Huntington has well remarked, "it is a definite and just description of what the Bible teaches, and there is no reason why it should not be adopted and used. It is sanctioned by the venerable and hallowed custom of Christian centuries, and of innumerable hosts of confessors, sages, and saints." Justin Martyr,

Athenagoras, and Theophilus, among the early Greek Fathers, and Tertullian, Novatian, and Cyprian, among the Latin, earnestly defended the doctrine of the Trinity against the heretics of that day, though of course it was not done, and could not have been done with all the modern scientific exactness of expression. Haydn, in his learned work, "The Dictionary of Dates," says: "The doctrine of the Trinity is generally received by all Christians. Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, who flourished in the second century, was the first who used the term *Trinity*, to express the Three sacred Persons in the Godhead."¹ The Apostles' Creed is, perhaps, the earliest formal Confession of Faith, and it most distinctly affirms the doctrine of the Trinity: "I believe in One God, the *Father* Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in *Jesus Christ* his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the *Holy Ghost*, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the *Holy Ghost*; the Holy Catholic

¹ Art. *Trinity and Trinitarians*, p. 618.

Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen." Opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity by the Gnostics, Ebionites, and Arians, induced Constantine the Great to summon an ecumenical council of divines, to pass upon that important question. That Council met at Nice, in the year A. D. 325, and was composed of 318 clergymen, who represented the intelligence and piety of that period. They incorporated the doctrine of the Trinity into what is called the Nicene Creed, and with such formality and scientific precision of statement that it has been accepted, with very little modification, by all Evangelical Christians to the present day. Thus, it appears, that from the time the baptismal formula was given by Christ to the apostles, the doctrine of the Trinity grew into greater accuracy of definition and clearness of statement, just as rapidly as it was denied and discussed, till it became a most settled and distinctive article of the Christian Faith. Since the formal incorporation of this Scripture doctrine into the creed of Christendom by the Council of Nice, the world has been more nearly unanimous in its belief of that article than perhaps of any other saving that of the existence of God. It has been held in

all the Christian ages with a unanimity so nearly entire, that it can, as safely as any other truth, challenge the famous test of Vincent of Lirens,—
“It must be believed *always, everywhere, and by all.*” “Truth,” says Dr. Huntington, “is not determined by majorities; and yet it would be contrary to the laws of our constitution not to be affected by a testimony so vast, uniform, and sacred, as that which is rendered by the common belief of the Christian history and the Christian countries to the truth of the Trinity.”
“In the face of libraries of close controversy, and the number of the schools, — all of them signs of the intense vitality and power hidden in the inmost spiritual economy of this article, — the strong thinkers upon it are, after all, essentially and persistently at one: the early and mediæval Fathers, the Continental and English Reformers, the Anglican scholars, the Puritan and American divines, Athanasius and Tholuck, Fénelon and Knox, Augustine and Anselm, Calvin and Taylor, Luther and Bossuet, Bull and Baxter, Horsley and Howe, Pearson, Newman, Pascal, Cudworth, Wolf, Butler, Tauler and Hopkins, Waterland and Edwards, Sherlock and Dwight, Stuart and Neander. Nice, Trent, Augsburg, Westminster, Princeton, Andover, New Haven, with their symbols, not-

withstanding their differences, *are Trinitarian.*"¹ It will strongly intensify this statement to add, that the *national and cosmopolitan churches* — churches, whose creeds have been subjected to the most searching examination and comparison by their ablest men — are unanimously Trinitarian. Of the large bodies of professed Christians whose faith is distinctively Trinitarian, may be mentioned the Church of Rome, the Church of the Waldenses, the Church of England, the Free Church of Scotland, the Moravian Church, the Church of the Huguenots, the Presbyterian Churches in the United States, the Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the various Dutch Churches, and the Baptist and Congregational Churches.²

Thus uniform has been the belief of Christians, in all the ages and nations, that the Infinite God exists in *Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. That sublimest of doxologies, *Gloria Patri*, etc., was ordained to be sung in the churches as early as A. D. 382 ;

¹ Serm. XX. pp. 358, 361.

² Though the Unitarians are Congregationalists they are really no exception to Congregational *churches*, inasmuch as they reject all creeds, and have no recognized system of belief. Their so-called churches are generally mere continuations of churches which were organized under Orthodox auspices, and are held together by other influences than a symbol of faith.

and from that year to the present, it has been sounding along the galleries of time, taken up by successive generations as their predecessors have fallen in death, rolling on with increasing volume over land and sea, sending its ecstatic pulsations into closets, families, conference rooms, churches, cathedrals, till the very air is choral with the song, and the wide world is transported to heaven by the general hallelujah. As the sun rises of a Sabbath morning, Christians of the Orient begin the song; Europe, rapt into ecstasy by the glad acclaim, with deeper, richer melody, and more thundering tones, prolongs the mighty anthem; and America and the Isles of the West, with their myriad voices, send up their responses in loftiest adoration of the great THREE in ONE.

“The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks shout to each other,
And mountain-tops from distant mountains catch the flying joy,
Till nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous HOSANNA round.”

III. The *Providential* evidence.

It perhaps might naturally be expected, that, if the Trinity of Persons in the Infinite God be so vital a truth in the Christian system, He would somehow *by his Providence mark and distinguish it*, as possessing that preëminent importance. He *has* so distinguished it, and now let us see how unmistakably He has done it.

He has so ordered events in His Providence, that *Chronology* comes in with its attestation to the truth of the Trinity. *Time* is reckoned to and from the advent of the Redeemer. The date of his birth, — *Annus Domini*, the year of our Lord, — is the point from which time is computed among Christian nations, and will doubtless continue to be to the end of the world. Accordingly we take up our almanacs, and read on the title-page, "The Almanac for the year of our *Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ*." Why does it not read the year of *Paul*, or *Plato*, or *Luther*? Plainly, because neither of them, nor any other merely human being, is entitled to such a distinction. No mere man is our "Lord and Saviour." But Jesus Christ is both. Such being His relations to the human race, it was fitting, — preëminently fitting, — that *time should be reckoned* from the epoch of his coming, to keep those relations, so fraught with interest and hope, forever fresh in the minds of men. The *Creation*, — *Annus Mundi*, — had been commemorated as the normal starting point in the measurement of time; but when "*Christ came*, who is over all, God blessed forever," there was an eminent propriety, that an event of so much greater importance should be forever after similarly distinguished.

“ 'T was great to speak a world from naught,
'T was *greater* to *redeem*.”

Thus God, by his Providence, makes our very almanacs, — about the last book in the world where we should expect to find any evidences of the Trinity, — proclaim every year to the nations the Supreme Divinity of his Beloved Son, and consequently the reality of the Trinity. If it be objected to this view that, among, the Mohammedans, time is reckoned from the *Hegira* of the False Prophet, and that among the ancient Romans it was computed from the foundation of the Imperial City, we have to say that our present argument has to do only with those who accept Christianity as the true religion. The question is not between Christianity and any false sytem, but between those who, professing to believe the Christian religion, accept or reject the doctrine of the Trinity. With all such we hold this argument has real weight, and is entitled to their serious consideration.

And books of *Travel*, too, are made by the Providence of God to teach the same great truth. Where is it that the traveller, as he roams over this wide world, finds his most sacred associations awakened? Is it when he visits Niagara or the Mammoth Cave? Is it

when he explores the arcana of Nineveh, or exhumes the long-forgotten generations of Pompeii, or ascends the Pyramids of Egypt? Is it not, rather, when he visits Bethlehem and Nazareth, Capernaum and Bethsaida, Gethsemane and Calvary? Go where you will in this world, no scenes awaken such an interest or call up such solemn associations, as those where the Lord of life and glory was born, lived, suffered, died. Every traveller wishes to see those hallowed places, — he never feels that he has travelled much till he has seen them; and when at last he reaches them, be he Christian or be he infidel, his first impulse is to take the shoes from his feet, for the place whereon he standeth is holy ground.

Now, the question is, Why does he feel so? Ah! these sacred associations, which make him tread so softly and bring unbidden tears to his eyes, are so many beautiful tributes to the Godhead of the Redeemer and the truth of the Trinity. If it be said that the Providence of God is no more significant in producing these impressions, than it is in awakening similar ones at the sacred places of false religionists, it is a sufficient reply that the one is the result of an intelligent appreciation of the historical facts in the case, while the other is the compound result of super-

stition and fanaticism. Whatever elements there may be which are common to them both, the sacred associations of Palestine are taken out of the category of false systems, and stamped with the Divine impress, by all those arguments which prove that Christianity alone is from Heaven. With all its professed friends, then, the argument should have weight, when the question between themselves is, whether the doctrine of the Trinity be true or not.

And the Providence of God has so ordered it that *Profane History* comes with her homage, and lays it at the feet of the Trinity.

Read the remarkable confession of Hume, with all his scepticism, that it is to the character and principles of the Puritans that England owes the freedom of her Constitution. Read Macaulay's celebrated critique on Milton, which, though one of his earliest, is one of his most popular literary efforts, and mark the truthfulness with which he sets forth the religious principles of the Puritans, — principles which derived all their tone and power from the doctrine of the Trinity.

And Bancroft, too, the American scholar and historian, though educated in the Unitarian faith, has, after long observation, from his historical standpoint, of the effects of these two systems

upon the character and destiny of man, materially altered his creed, and has published to the world his present belief in the following sublime language:—“From the time that this truth of the Triune God was clearly announced, He was no longer conceived as a remote and shadowy causality, but appeared as all that is good, and beautiful, and true; as Goodness itself Incarnate, Interceding, Redeeming, and Inspiring, the Infinite Mediator, Paraclete, and Comforter. The doctrine once communicated to man was ineradicable. It spread as widely, as swiftly as the light; and the idea of ‘GOD WITH US’ dwells in every system of thought that can pretend to vitality, in every oppressed nation whose struggles to be free have the prospect of success, in every soul that sighs for redemption.”¹

The Providence of God has so ordered it again, that *Poetry* comes in and hangs her garlands upon the Cross. Though there is much of poetry which is tributary to the interests of error, it is a truth, full of comfort to every good man, that the greater part of that which has the firmest hold of the human heart, and is the most operative upon our race, is *religious* poetry, and is highly charged with the Evangelical element. Shakspeare is about the only important

¹ *Address before the N. Y. Historical Society, 1854, p. 26.*

exception to this general truth. Milton, with his vast erudition and gorgeous richness of language, will always hold his place, high among the moral influences which form the character of men.

“Of man’s first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one GREATER
MAN restore us,” —

mankind will never cease to read. But who shall describe the influence of Wesley and of Watts upon the present character and eternal destiny of our race? Their religious hymns have long animated the faith, quickened the devotions, and evoked the hosannas of Christians, and will continue to do so in the purest ages of the Church. While Watts is training “Infant Minds” in the nursery to lisp the Redeemer’s praise, both these lyric poets of the Church are leading the songs of assembled hosts, in all the evangelical congregations that begirt the globe. Cowper and Doddridge, Steele and Young, Montgomery and Heber, Tennyson and Browning, Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, are the very handbooks of poetry in almost every intelligent family, and are working in the same Evangelical direction.

If then that poetry is the best, which has the firmest hold on human hearts, which everybody will read and will sing, which forms the taste, and moulds the principles, and creates the character of millions for another Life, — is not that Providence intensely significant which has raised up such men for the especial purpose of sounding the praises of the Trinity in every land?

And *Music*, too, in the Providence of God, is made to chant its anthems in adoration of the Trinity. This noble art has also been prostituted to the worst purposes, but its primal, unperverted province was seen when the morning stars sang together, “to celebrate the glory of the Second Person, as He laid the foundations of the earth.” From the time of David, music has tried “its choicest strains” in honor of Redeeming Love. How much it does in the family, the prayer-meeting, the sanctuary, to give wing to the devotions of the people of God! Go where you will over this great globe; let the assembly of devout Christians you find be “the two or three” in the private circle, or the “great congregation” in the vast cathedral; and let the hymn be given out, —

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name,” —

which everybody feels to be sacrilege to sing to

any other tune than "Coronation," — and the instant preparation, the brightening countenance, the outpouring hallelujah, —

"Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all," —

attest the fervent homage of every pious heart to the Redeemer of the world, and that no other theme equals this in its appeals to the Christian sensibilities of men.

God has so ordered it, also, that the greatest *musical composition* the world has seen was written in express honor of the Deity of His Son. We refer, as every one knows, to Handel's Oratorio, "The Messiah." Handel composed that immortal work more than a hundred years ago, but it is only within a recent period that musical taste in America or Europe became so cultivated as to appreciate its dramatic character, its melting tenderness, its unrivalled majesty. From the soothing recitative with which it opens, —

"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God,"

intended to prepare the mind for his advent, — on through the annunciation, birth, life, crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension and enthronement of the "Messiah," to its sublime *finale*, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," etc., in which heaven, earth, and sea vie with

each other in His loftiest praise, — we have the grandest tribute of music to the glory of the Adorable Trinity. How much out of harmony with the theme must be every Unitarian, who attempts to sing that great Oratorio!

Now our argument is, why did God raise up the immortal Handel, endow him with such transcendent genius, direct his mind to this great subject, and enable him to produce a work of such unapproached and ever-growing power, unless it was to proclaim to all the earth the Trinity of His Person? If His Providence extends to every event, — if it directs alike the orbs of heaven and the sparrow's fall, — then, in the particulars now recited and in many more, it has made the Chronology, the Travels, the History, the Poetry, and the Music of the world declare His Tri-Unity. We see the footprints of the Trinity all along the pathway of His Providential dispensations as unmistakably, as we hear His footfalls through the corridors of all time.

IV. *The Practical evidence.*

A doctrine, of so much moment as we have seen the Trinity to be, must necessarily exert a decided influence on the piety of the world. Indeed it is clear, that, where this is discarded, little remains to *make men Christians at all*. It is, of all other truths, the most intensely prac-

tical. It comprises the sublime working-power of Redemption. Unitarianism, in its natural, dynamic operation as a system, does not regenerate men, for it denies the Divinity both of the Atoner and of the Regenerator, as well as that deep depravity of man which makes an Atonement and a Regeneration indispensable. It is therefore powerless for the conversion of men, both because it does not admit the necessity of such conversion, and because it rejects the Divine appliances to produce that result. Unitarians may use the terms Sin, Atonement, Regeneration, but they use them in a sense so superficial that they are quite unmeaning. In their lips, these terms are but a lunar reflection of their solar energy, as used by Evangelical men. There may be, indeed, exceptional cases of real Christians in the ranks of Unitarianism, but Dr. Huntington, who has long been familiar with the internal state of that denomination, ascribes their conversion to "*hereditary* influences which the denomination do not acknowledge," and which are entirely outside of their professed faith.¹

1 "For man being renewed in his mind, and beholding and understanding Thy truth, needs not man as his director, but by Thy direction Thou teachest him, *now made capable*, to discern the Trinity of the Unity, and the Unity of the Trinity."— *Confessions of Augustine*, Andover ed. p. 398.

The history of the Church illuminates this point. The Rev. Thomas Scott, of the Church of England, and author of the celebrated Commentary on the Bible, entered the ministry and attempted to preach the Gospel, without any personal piety, or any conception of the genius of Christianity as a system of Redemption. He says, “I was nearly a Socinian and Pelagian, and wholly an Arminian.” He further says, “With a heart full of pride and wickedness, my life polluted with many unrepented, unforgiven sins; without one cry for mercy, or one prayer for direction; having concealed my real sentiments under the mask of general expressions; having subscribed articles directly contrary to what I believed; and having blasphemously declared in the presence of God and the congregation, in the most solemn manner, sealing it with the Lord’s Supper, that I judged myself to be inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take that office upon me; — *not knowing or believing that there was any Holy Ghost*; — on September the 20th, 1772, I was ordained a deacon.” In this fearful state of mind, for more than four years, he oftentimes played at cards in the week, and preached what he called the Gospel on the Sabbath; till, at last, through the agency of the excellent John Newton, he discovered that there

is a "Holy Ghost" by His renewing grace upon his heart. Immediately he renounced his Socinianism, and was ever after an able advocate of the Evangelical faith. The Rev. Dr. Chalmers, of the Church of Scotland, is another example, perhaps still more in point. Gifted with an intellect of gigantic strength, cultivated and matured by the very highest attainments in science, and possessing rhetorical powers such as have rarely adorned the sacred desk, he had every possible advantage for preaching the Gospel successfully, if it can be done at all, with its distinctive doctrines all left out. This experiment he unconsciously persisted in for more than ten years. During this long period, he often went into his pulpit with "the most unappeasable disquietude of conscience," and the most distressing convictions of sin. Finally, a severe illness and the reading of Wilberforce's "Practical View of Christianity," by the blessing of God, opened his eyes, and brought him a guilty sinner to the foot of the Cross. The tone of his public ministrations was suddenly changed. "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified" was now his great theme. He himself characterized the utter powerlessness of his previous preaching in the following energetic terms: "Christ, through whose blood the sinner is brought to the Heavenly Lawgiver

whom he has offended, was scarcely ever spoken of, or spoken of in such a way as stripped Him of all the importance of his character and offices. I am not sensible that all the vehemence with which I urged the virtues and the proprieties of social life had *the weight of a feather* upon the moral habits of my parishioners. It was not till I got impressed by the utter alienation of the heart from God; it was not till the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon their acceptance, and the Holy Spirit, through the channel of Christ's Mediatorship, was set before them, that I ever heard even of any subordinate reformatations among them. * I have been taught that to *preach Christ*, is the only effective way of preaching morality." If, then, Dr. Chalmers, with his incomparable eloquence but without the doctrines of the Gospel, could not discover, after ten years' trial, that he had effected the slightest improvement even in "the moral habits of his parishioners," and if, after his conversion he became, as is well known, one of the most successful ministers in Scotland, what a commentary do these facts read to the world of the impotence of the Rationalistic, and the power of the Evangelical system! But the comparative impotence of Unitarianism is *confessed by its*

friends. Dr. Joseph Priestley said that "a great number of the Unitarians are without much practical religion, and there is a *greater apparent conformity to the world in them* than is observable in others." The following confession of the Rev. James Martineau, probably the ablest Unitarian minister of the present day in England, is as unaccountable as it is remarkable. Speaking of those who deny the Trinity he says: "Neither my intellectual preference nor my moral admiration goes heartily with their heroes, sects, or productions of any age. Ebionites, Arians, Socinians, all seem to me to *contrast unfavorably* with their opponents, and to exhibit a type of thought and character far less worthy, on the whole, of the true genius of Christianity. I am conscious that my deepest obligations, as a learner from others, are in almost every department to writers *not of my own creed*. In Biblical interpretation, I derive from Calvin and Whitby the help that fails me in Crell and Belsham. In devotional literature and religious thought, I find nothing of ours that does not pale before Augustine, Tauler and Pascal. And in the poetry of the Church, it is the Latin or the German hymns, or the lines of Charles Wesley or of Keble that fasten on my memory and heart, and make all else seem poor and

cold. That I find myself in intellectual accordance with the Socini, or Blandrata, or Servetus in one cardinal doctrine," (the bare Unity of God,) "and that a doctrine not distinctively Christian, but belonging also to Judaism, to Islam, and to simple Deism,—is as nothing compared with the intense response wrung from me by some of Luther's readings of St. Paul, or by his favorite book, the 'Theologia Germanica.'"

The Rev. Dr. Bellows, one of the ablest members of that denomination in this country, has pronounced Unitarianism, "*a failure*," and is looking round for a better faith.

The practical workings of that system are thus truthfully set forth by Dr. Huntington:—
"There is a diminished attachment to the person of the Saviour. The exultant thankfulness, at release by the *Cross* from a deserved misery, is gone. A living faith in any Divine Personality gives place to a frigid intellectual nature-worship. Deism is followed by naturalism, naturalism by materialism,—a materialism not a whit the less Pagan, because adorned with taste, learning, and a liberal application of those terms of Christian phraseology, and those habits of external decorum, which are the inestimable boon and heritage transmitted from the disowned creed of the Gospels. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost

dwindles into an attenuated, æsthetic impression of a regular, natural Providence. The special act of that Person, Regeneration, is dwarfed into a self-improvement by the human will. The liberty of genuine prayer is shortened — if prayer in articulate forms survives at all — into a dull and barren process of *self-stimulation*, which yields effects like dropping buckets into empty wells ; — for *a fixed order of events* cannot hear supplication or praise. Missions are languid or unknown. The parishes are deadened at home. Discussions or diversions occupy the empty room of the prayer-meeting, and the question, whether anything which can properly be called a Church of Christ will continue, is only a question of time.”¹

Look, also, for the ineffectiveness of Unitarian preaching, at the topics very frequently discussed. The great themes of Evangelical truth being generally discarded, in the paucity of Scriptural subjects which remains, a conflagration, a steamboat disaster, or an unusual political event, is hailed as a godsend for the next Sabbath’s sermon ; and once, we have been informed, when no “sad accident” by flood or fire had for a long time occurred to furnish the desired topic, a clergyman of that faith eloquently discoursed

¹ *Christian Believing and Living.* Sermon. xx.

to his people upon the comparative commercial merits of Boston and Baltimore, as ports of entry!¹ Literary disquisitions take the place of earnest appeals to "flee from the wrath to come."

"How oft, when Paul has served him with a text,
Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully preached:"—

till vital piety, and the congregation too, have been mostly preached out of the House of God!

We contemplate this picture, none too deeply shaded, with unmingled sorrow; and now turn away from it with joy to consider, briefly, the cheering effects of the doctrine of the Trinity and its related truths upon the spiritual interests of men. In no aspect, perhaps, do these truths show their moral power more impressively, than in their relation to *the highest forms of Christian experience*. A cloud of witnesses, from all the Christian ages, testify to the transcendent power of the Trinity upon the devoutest intercourse of the soul with God,—“praying, worshipping, climbing up unto Him, through an experience

¹ Facts are frequently occurring among us which demonstrate the waning fortunes of Unitarianism, such as the gradual recovery of Harvard University to its primal design, and the abandonment of Antioch College, Ohio, by President Hill, from a sheer want of funds to support the Faculty. Referring to the limited and diminishing influence of that system, an eminent Unitarian clergyman recently said, that Unitarians, in their free-and-easy conversations among themselves, often speak of it “as little more than a ‘Boston notion.’”

shaped in the moulds" of this doctrine. More than two centuries ago, Francis Junius, a distinguished Professor of Divinity in the University at Heidelberg, affirmed, that he was "converted from atheism by the *Christian Trinity*, or by the sense of God rolled in upon his soul by that stupendous mystery of the Gospel." John Howe, one of the greatest lights of the English Church, says: "When we are to consider God *as our God*, we must take in the conception of *each of the persons*, — God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, *is my God*." The Marquis De Renty, a distinguished French disciple of the seventeenth century, describes his own living experience in these words: "I bear in me ordinarily an *experimental* versification of the most Holy Trinity, which elevates me to a simple view of God." The great and philosophic Edwards, of Northampton, says: "God has appeared glorious to me *on account of the Trinity*. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that He subsists in *Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced have not been those that have arisen from the hope of my own good estate, but from a direct view of the glorious things of the Gospel." The celebrated Lady Maxwell, of the Wesleyan connection, says:

"Yesterday, while attending public worship, I was favored with a clear view of the Trinity, which I never had before, and *enjoyed fellowship with a Triune God*. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and felt my mind fixed in deep contemplation upon that glorious, incomprehensible object, the ever-blessed Trinity. Hitherto, I have been led to view the Holy Ghost chiefly as an agent, now I behold Him distinctly as the Third Person of the Trinity. I have, in my own soul, an *experimental proof* of the truth of this doctrine. Eternity alone can unfold the sacred mystery; but, in the mean time, what we may and do comprehend of it is replete with comfort to the Christian."

The Rev. Dr. Bushnell, to whom we are indebted for the collection of several of these facts, says: "It is impossible not to admire the gospel formula, that can so flood the human soul in its narrowed and blinded state with the sense of God, and raise it to a pitch of blessing so transcendent. The amazing power of the Trinity, acting thus on the human imagination, and the contribution thus made to Christian experience, cannot be over-estimated. After we have thus discovered how closely related the *Christian Trinity is to Christian experience, and all the highest realizations of God*, it will not be

difficult to account for the remarkable tenacity of the doctrine. It cannot die ! God, by His Trinity, thus brought nigh to our fallen nature and accommodated to our wants as sinners, what can ever expel this doctrine from the world's thought ? As soon shall we part with the daylight or the air, as lapse into the cold and feeble monotheism, in which some teachers of our time are ready to boast as the gospel of reason. No ; this corner-stone is not to be so easily removed. It was planted before the foundation of the world, and it will remain. It is eternally woven into the practical economy of God's kingdom, and it must therefore stand firm."

The doctrine of the Trinity, thus forming the very groundwork of our salvation and the interior life of the devoutest men, is the main-spring of all human progress, of Christian missions to the heathen, and of all revivals of pure religion. It meets the wants of the individual soul in its conscious estrangement from God, fills it with profound sorrow for sin, and with "joy unspeakable" in the hour of conversion, and then gradually raises it to the highest plane of Christian experience and hope.

In his holiest frames and in his nearest access to God, the Christian feels his need of the Trinity, and of all the Persons in the Trinity, to effect

his salvation. He needs the Father to Plan the work and to Preside over its progress; the Son to Atone for him here and to Intercede for him above; and the Holy Ghost to supplement and give effect to the work of both, by Renewing, Sanctifying, and Comforting his heart. He cannot pray to God without the Trinity; he cannot praise God without the Trinity. Which of the Persons, then, can he spare? Every sensibility of his soul cries out, "Neither!" "Neither!" Take away either, and you take away his all. He feels that he hourly needs the coöperating, interacting grace of the Three, and that he shall need it to give him victory in death and a crown in Heaven.

Here, then, we rest our fourfold argument for the *Tri-Unity of Persons* in the Ever-Blessed God; — and it only remains to express the hope, that all the readers of this article may at once cordially accept this precious mystery of the Christian Faith in its vital power. In this way, and in this alone, can they be prepared to unite with the redeemed Church on earth and in heaven in their sublime and rapturous ascription,—“GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON, AND TO THE HOLY GHOST; AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW, AND EVER SHALL BE, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN.”



LUX IN TENEBRIS,
OR SUNLIGHT THROUGH THE CLOUDS.

BLEST Saviour! if I'm 'Thine,
Scatter my doubts away,
And on this darkened soul of mine
Pour beams of heavenly day.

Give me some taste of heaven
While in this vale of tears ;
Some opening gleams and transports e'en,
Of beatific years ; —

Some splendors of Thy throne
To gild this dreary land ;
Some visions of the golden crown,
Prepared at Thy right hand ; —

Some nectar drops of joy
Which angels cannot taste,
As I lie down at last to die
Upon my Saviour's breast ; —

Some streams of heavenly light
To illumine death's dark vale,
While sainted friends, enrobed in white,
And beckoning seraphs hail.

Then will I lay my crown
At my Redeemer's feet,
And raise the loudest, sweetest song
In all that world of light.

Victorious pæans break
From all the ransomed throng,
And Gabriel leans upon his harp,
Astonished at the song.

